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Book D3W9

THE
HISTORY OF DEDHAM,

FROM THE
BEGINNING OF ITS SETTLEMENT

IN
SEPTEMBER, 1635.....TO MAY, 1827.

BY ERASTUS WORTHINGTON.

Beatus ille qui procul negotiis,
Ut prisca gens mortalium;
Paterna rura bubus exercet suis
Solutus omni fœnore.

Hor. Epod. 11



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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, ss.

District Clerk's Office.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the second day of June, A. D. 1827, and in the fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States of America, ERASTUS WORTHINGTON, of the said District, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following, to wit:

“The History of Dedham, from the beginning of its settlement in September, 1635 to May, 1827. By Erastus Worthington.

“Beatus ille qui procul negotiis,
Ut prisca gens mortalium:
Paterna rura hibus exerceat suis
Solutus omni fœnore.—*Hor. Epod. 11.*”

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JNO. W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts

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PREFACE.

SOME facts related in the following sketch, will appear trivial. I am not certain that a sufficient reason can be given for extending the history of a town of no considerable extent, to so many pages. Several considerations, however, have prevailed over this doubt. It has appeared to me that a town like Dedham, having its first settlement at an early date, having copious materials for an history, and nearly resembling a much larger extent of country around it, in its character and past transactions, might be properly selected for a full historical and topographical description. The history of a town, although much of it must necessarily have only a local interest, may yet be so arranged, that it may afford some views of society, not exhibited in more general histories. It may bring us nearer the homes, and enable us to see more distinctly the doings of the inhabitants. It may assist us in tracing the origin of manners and customs, and in judging of the influence of laws and public proceedings, on the character of the people.

Under all forms of government in this state, whether it were colonial, provincial, or republican, many important measures, and especially all revolutionary proceedings, have been submitted to the primary assemblies of the people, to be examined and acted on by them. During the revolutionary war in particular, towns and parishes not only expressed their opinions on many subjects connected with that event, but they actually exercised much of the jurisdiction of a national government in prosecuting that war. How these small corporations, organised solely for municipal or parochial purposes, transacted that business, how they succeeded in procuring soldiers and warlike stores, and did other things to promote the same great end, is a proper subject for historical inquiry. Reflections of this kind have induced me to state facts somewhat minutely, which if they be not viewed in their connection as causes or effects, are comparatively speaking, of no importance.

In this essay I have endeavoured, so far as my materials would permit, to exhibit a faithful view of society in this place, in a retrospect of one hundred and ninety years. In doing this, I have endeavoured on the one hand, to avoid the error of bestowing extravagant or unmerited praise, and on the other, to give no just cause of offence, by an improper narration of private affairs, having no relation to the general character. I have attempted to do what gratitude and justice require to be done, to make

known the substantial virtues, and the real merit of the present and past generations in this town, but in doing this, I have not submitted to the disgraceful and immoral task of composing an historical sketch, and therein suppressing all notice of the errors or follies of past times, as some have suggested ought to be done. I have hesitated whether the events of the last twenty years, should be herein related, but I have concluded, that as a witness of events can give a more satisfactory account of things, the history should be brought down to the present time.

The records of the town and parishes, and of the first church, have been my authorities, except when I have quoted others. These records I have carefully perused, and have found them so circumstantial in some cases, that they would authorise me to state some facts, no where directly asserted. When I have depended on tradition, I have given notice of it.

Before the reader finally condemns me for descending too much to small affairs, I hope he will reflect that there are some popular precedents to lead me astray, among which are *Espriellas Letters* and *governor Winthrop's Journal*, and I might likewise mention as additional motive, an increasing taste for these kinds of historical details.

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THE

History of Dedham.

CHAPTER I.

Grants from the general court. Ancient boundaries. Original state of the land. Forests. Swamps. First crops. Origin of Mother Brook. Description of the village in 1664. Present boundaries. Parishes. Description of the town at the present time.

IN the year 1635, the general court then sitting at New-towne, granted a tract of land south of Charles river to twelve men. The next year nineteen persons, including the first twelve, petitioned the general court, then at Boston, for an additional grant of all the lands south of Charles river, and above the falls, not before granted, and for a tract five miles square, on the north side of Charles river, for the purpose of making a settlement. A grant was made agreeable to this petition.

The land included in the last grant, constitutes the following towns at the present time.

Dedham, which now contains three territorial parishes, and three poll parishes.

Medfield.

Wrentham. Two territorial parishes, and a society of baptists.

Needham. Two territorial parishes.

Bellingham. Two religious societies.

Walpole.

Franklin.

Dover.

Natick and part of Sherburne.

Under the grant of five miles square, north of Charles river, the grantees acquired a title to Dedham Island, Needham, Natick, and three thousand four hundred acres

in the east part of Sherburne. Philemon Dalton purchased three hundred acres of Samuel Dudley, of Roxbury, situated on or near the south line of Roxbury, and between that line and Dedham village. This land, although within the bounds of Roxbury when purchased, was afterwards considered a part of Dedham; and was ceded to the proprietors of the town, by the original purchaser. The boundary line between the towns at this place was for several years a subject of dispute, but was finally decided by a committee of the general court, in favor of Dedham. The eastern boundary of Dedham, during a century from its first settlement, was a considerable distance west of Neponset river, running nearly parallel with the general course of the river, and about a mile distant from it. But the towns of Stoughton and Dedham, by mutual consent carried back the boundary to Neponset river, and it has ever since remained the dividing line between the two towns. The great care bestowed by the first settlers, in fixing their boundaries with precision, and afterwards at proper periods examining and re-establishing the monuments which denoted them, has had a happy effect in preventing disputes on that subject.

Ancient state of the land.—No record exists which describes the situation of the meadows on Charles and Neponset rivers, or the forests. The meadows on Neponset river were so far cleared of trees and underwood, that they produced grass. The inhabitants of Dedham in the beginning of their settlement, hired those meadows of Israel Stoughton for a pasture for their young cattle. A tradition existed at an early period, that the grass, called *fowl meadow*, which is superior to that of any other kind in the fresh water meadows, was first brought to the meadows in Dedham, by a large flight of wild fowls, and that from thence the meadows and the grass received their names.* All the rivers and streams were clogged with trees, roots and other matter, which had been accumulated by time. The water was in consequence much

* Dr. Nathaniel Ames, the elder, in his Almanack for 1764, gives the following account of the origin of fowl meadow grass. "The famous fowl meadow grass," says he, "was brought into a spacious meadow on Neponset river, by the wild fowl, which frequent that place, where it first made its appearance about fifty years ago. The seed is now collected, and carried into many parts of the country."—*Hutchinson's History*, vol. 1, p. 425.

longer retained on the meadows. There are numerous votes in the town records, relating to the clearing of the streams of Charles and Neponset rivers. Numerous committees were appointed, to devise plans for lowering the water in Charles river. Hay, of a very coarse kind, was in the beginning of the settlement obtained from these meadows. In some places on the bank of Charles river, trees are imbedded in the mud eight or ten feet, and are as low as the bottom of the present bed of the river. From these and other data, it is supposed that the Charles river meadows have gradually arisen from a broken impenetrable swamp, covered with fallen trees, and the greatest part of the time covered with water, to its present state. The grass in many places has much improved in quality within present recollection. A coat of peat, from three to four feet in depth covers these meadows, and may have been principally formed within two hundred years. The deep soil of the upland was covered with large trees, principally oak. The large oak tree now standing in front of Mr. Avery's dwelling house in East street, of sixteen feet circumference, is probably much older than this town, and forcibly reminds us, how strong and stately stood his old companions of the forest. Wigwam and Purgatory-Swamps were dismal places. They were covered with a thick growth of cedars and hemlock. These with much underwood rendered these places almost impenetrable. Wigwam Swamp became the resort of wild beasts. It being near the village, the wolf-howl was heard from it. To break up that den, it was made a condition of every grant of land, that the grantee should clear away the wood standing on a certain quantity of land in the swamp.

The land when first cleared produced wheat and flax, although these crops cannot now be produced. From the frequent mention of wheat being made a tender in payment, and the contracts to be fulfilled by the payment of wheat, it may be inferred that it was a usual crop. But I discover no evidence to oppose the statement of Hutchinson that wheat began to blast after the year 1664. The rich mould which had been created by time, rendered the lands productive. It may be presumed that all their crops were good at first, except that of English grass. That article was very scarce for many years, for in 1649 the wet

season prevented the making of hay on the meadows, and there was great distress here on that account. The inhabitants went from this town to the Wrentham meadows to cut grass that year.

Origin of Mother Brook. About a quarter of a mile north of the new court house in Dedham, Mother Brook starts out of Charles river and runs in a proper and direct course round the high lands near the village, and then at the only place where it could find a passage, goes easterly and joins the Neponset river, forming in its course between the two rivers five mill seats of great value. This stream thus leaving its principal bed and running off to join a neighbouring stream has been represented as a natural curiosity; at least the inhabitants have no knowledge of its having been caused by man. When I discovered the record of its being an artificial work, a natural, but groundless fear was excited, that it would do harm to publish the truth concerning it. Abraham Shaw had been encouraged to build a water mill in the first year of the settlement and a committee was appointed to designate the place. Shaw soon after died, but the committee suggested the measure of forming this new stream, which is recorded in these words: "28th day, 1st month, 1639. Ordered that a ditch shall be dug at common charge, through upper Charles meadow unto East Brook, that it may both be a partition fence in the same, and also may form a suitable course unto a water mill, that it shall be found fitting to set a mill upon in the opinion of a workman to be employed for that purpose." The water mill was soon after built, as we shall see hereafter. The source of East Brook was more than one hundred rods east of the Norfolk and Bristol turnpike where it crosses this stream. At this point a curious observer may see the truth of this account, in the original state of the ground; he will in vain seek for any natural bed of this stream. In addition to this evidence the tradition of cutting the canal for this stream, has been preserved in one family, which from fear of consequences, have refrained from divulging the fact.

Description of the village in 1664. The first settlers agreed that each married man should have a house lot of twelve acres; part upland, and part meadow. In loca-

ting the lots by such a rule, they must necessarily be near each other, on the margin of the meadows near the modern village. Such in fact was the case. In 1664, ninety-five small houses near each other were situated within a short distance of the place where the new court house now stands ; the greater part of them east of that place, and around Dwight's brook. A row of houses stood on the north side of High street, as that road was then called, which extends from the bridge over Dwight's brook westwardly by the court house. The total amount of the value of these houses was 691 pounds. Four only of the houses were valued at 20 pounds. The greater number were valued from three to ten pounds. The greatest number of these houses were built soon after the first settlement commenced. There were then very few carpenters, joiners or masons in the colony. There was no saw mill in the settlement for many years. The only boards which could be procured at first, were those which were sawed by hand. The saw pits, now seen, denote that boards were sawed in the woods. The necessary materials, bricks, glass and nails, were scarcely to be obtained. These houses therefore must have been principally constructed by farmers, not by mechanics, and have been very rude and inconvenient. They were probably log-houses. Their roofs were covered with thatch. By an ordinance of the town, a ladder was ordered to extend from the ground to the chimney, as a substitute for a more perfect fire engine. Around these houses nothing was seen but stumps, clumsy fences of poles, and an uneven and unsubdued soil ; such as all the first settlements in New England present. The native forest trees were not suitable shades for a door yard. A shady tree was not then such an agreeable object as it now is, because it could form no agreeable contrast with cleared grounds. Where the meeting house of the first parish now stands, there stood for more than 30 years a low building, thirty six feet long and twenty wide, twelve feet high, with a thatched roof, and a large ladder resting on it. This was the first meeting house. Near by was the school house standing on an area of 18 feet by 14, and rising to three stories. The third story however was a watch house of small dimensions. The watch house was beside the ample stone chimney. The spectator elevated on the little box

called the watch house, might view this plain, on which a part of the present village stands, then a common plough field, containing then about two hundred acres of cleared land, partially subdued ; yet full of stumps and roots. Around him at a farther distance, were the *herd walks*, as the common feeding lands were called, in the language of that time. One of these herd-walks was on Dedham Island north of Charles river, and one was at East street and more fully in view. The other herd walk was on South plain. The herd walks were at first no better cultivated than cutting down the trees, and carrying away the wood and timber, and afterwards, when it was practicable in the spring of the year, burning them over under the direction of town officers called *wood reeves*. Land thus treated would in the spring appear barren ; for nothing would be seen but black stumps, the burnt soil, and the rocks. It would scarcely appear better when the wild grass and the cropped shrubs next succeeded. The meadows were not yet cleared to any great extent. Beyond these herd walks, was a continued wilderness, which was becoming more disagreeable to the inhabitants, for the cattle and goats and swine seem to have allured the wolves to their neighborhood. The dense swamps about Wigwam were not yet cleared. The numerous dogs in the plantation, which were so troublesome to the worshipping assembly, were not a sufficient guard against the wolves. The inhabitants for many years after this period encouraged their hunters by additional bounties to destroy these troublesome enemies.

The herd walks in 1659 contained 532 acres, and the inhabitants then had feeding therein 477 cattle. The roads were very imperfect. We hear of persons passing on the bridge and cause way at Dwight's brook, when the water thereon was as high as the horses belly, so late as the year 1700.

A law of the colony as well as the dangers of the people, compelled the first settlers to build their houses near each other. The necessity of adhering to this law, continued more than 50 years. In 1682 complaints were made in town meeting, that some had built houses a mile and an half from the meeting house. It was prohibited at that time. But the law soon after began to be disregarded, and the inhabitants soon abandoned their first habitations :

and built houses in all parts of the present town. Sixty or seventy years time swept away the humble village of the first settlers ; and the place was occupied by a few farmers for about a hundred years. When Dedham became the seat of justice for the county of Norfolk, then began the second village on the place of the former one.

The present village including Connecticut corner, contains upwards of one hundred houses. Nearly all of them are two stories high and convenient. More than four fifths of the houses are painted, a few are elegant, so far as that term can with propriety be applied to a wooden house. The public buildings are three houses for public worship, a stone jail and a new stone court house. It may be estimated that the present town contains a quantity of land equal to a tract of six and an half miles in length and five and a half miles in breadth. The Norfolk and Bristol turnpike runs from the Roxbury line, in a south westerly direction through the town, intersecting it lengthwise, leaving somewhat the greatest section on the west of it. There are sixty-seven miles of other roads. The extensive and valuable meadows on Neponset river are skirted with forests, sometimes with the evergreens of the low-land, and then with forests of oak and walnut. There are several smooth plains of some extent. The uplands in some places have rocky or uneven surface unfit for cultivation. These places will always present the same appearance ; for they will be used only for growing wood, for which they are valuable.

Excepting these wood lands, which are not too extensive for their appropriated use, the surface is agreeably varied with rising grounds of a smooth surface. The ground most elevated in the town, is that where is situated the meeting house of the third parish. From that place the spectator has an extensive prospect. This spot may be considered as a place devoted forever in the affections of the people in that neighbourhood ; since their late pastor the Rev. Thomas Thatcher, on the occasion of pulling down the old meeting house for the purpose of building a new one thereon, so appropriately applied to it the text of his discourse, "*Our Fathers worshipped on this Mountain.*" A tract of the best land in town is situated on the hills north of this meeting house. The stranger passing on the main roads in town, sees nothing, the buildings ex-

cepted, above ordinary interest. Yet if he have a taste for a variety of rural scenes,* he may be delighted with places on Dedham Island, with the banks of the Mother Brook at the mills, with the thick woods south of Wigwam, and even with that forest called Muddy Pond woods, and wood lands south of it, and particularly with that high ground north of the third parish meeting house, called *Fox hill*. A village is about to arise at a place called the Mills, one mile and a half east of the Court house. The water power of five dams across Mother Brook, will soon move a considerable quantity of machinery; and there must soon be a considerable increase of houses and population at that place, possibly it may in a short time exceed that around the court house.

In the tables which I shall annex to this sketch, I shall give a more definite description of the rising manufacturing establishments at this place.

* *Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes
Flumina amem Sylvas que inglorius.—Virgil.*

CHAPTER II.

How a settler became a proprietor of the lands. Mode of dividing lands at first. Common ploughfield. Wood Lands. Rules for making future dividends of lands established in 1656. Disputes arising therefrom. Finally settled by committee of general court. Measures to extinguish the Indian titles. Treaty with king Philip and other sachems. Measures to establish other plantations. Medfield in the records called *Bargarstowe*. Wrentham called *Wollomonopong*. Deerfield called *Petuntuck*. Natick Indians principally under the care of Mr. Eliot.

How persons became proprietors of the common lands.—THE second grant of the general court in September, 1636, enlarging the former one, for a plantation, was made to nineteen persons. These grantees of course were the sole owners until they admitted new associates. This they did at first without demanding any compensation. By the fourth article in the town covenant, every man was entitled to have lots in town, who was admitted an inhabitant, and would sign the covenant, which obliged him to pay all sums imposed on him rateably, and subjected him to the observance of all orders and constitutions necessary for the public peace, and a loving society.

As the new comers were voted into the society, they immediately had lots assigned them.

After the wood was cleared off their home lots, the inhabitants applied to the wood reeves for leave to cut wood and timber, to cut hoop poles, and peal bark on the common lands. The frequent practice of cutting without leave caused much difficulty.

In 1642, the proprietors, then forty-seven in number, agreed that 200 acres of the land where the houses now stand south of high street, should be made a common tillage field; and that each proprietor's share therein, should be marked out and assigned to him by seven men chosen for that purpose.

The execution of this design shows the excellent spirit of the inhabitants, and the great influence of their principal men.

The seven committee men decided that the quantity of land to be assigned to each person ought not to depend

on one arbitrary rule, but on the various considerations of each man's personal merit, and usefulness, on his ability to improve, or the amount of taxes by him paid. Some men, then servants, were to have lots as freemen. Upon this plan, major Lusher with the rest of the committee, set off to Mr. Allin, the minister, 23 acres, to elder Hunting and deacon Chickering, 14 acres each, to major Lusher 13 acres, to the remainder of the inhabitants from eight to one acre each. How admirable the love of peace which submits without complaint to such a division!! Can any Agrarian law ever effect a division of lands so perfect as this?

In 1645, 375 acres of wood land were divided among the proprietors on a similar plan.

In 1656, the proprietors resolved they would not make any more free grants of their common lands to strangers. It became necessary therefore to establish some permanent rule for dividing their lands, among the present proprietors and their heirs. No one pretended that all should have an equal share. They agreed on this principle.—That each man's share should be proportioned to the valuation of his property, as it was made the last year for the purpose of assessing the rates. They then found that the number of acres in the herd walks, or cow commons, was 532 acres, and the number of cattle fed thereon somewhat less. They further found that by allowing one cow common for every eight pounds valuation of estate, the whole number of cow common rights or shares would be four hundred and seventy-seven. And this would make the number of cow commons the nearest to their then number of cattle. Five goat commons or five sheep commons were computed equal to one cow common, and were used as fractions of a whole right. When this rule came to be applied, it bore hardly on several poor persons, whose estates were low in the valuation. The proprietors therefore, so far departed from the rule, that they granted to these poor men, according to the necessity or equity of their case, twenty-five cow common rights more, which added to the former number made five hundred and two common rights or shares. By making the number of shares five hundred and two, a two fold purpose was answered. It regulated the right which each man then had in the herd walk, and it would serve as a rule in all

future dividends throughout their extensive proprietary. Thus far the proprietors proceeded without any difficulty, and what they had done was not afterwards questioned. But they went farther and determined, that those proprietors who had lands in town, but who did not reside in it at that time, should not have any right to put cattle into the cow commons, although they should have dividends in the lands. This decision operated unequally on ensign Henry Philips, who then lived in Boston, and on several others. They made their complaints. To settle this dispute, major Humphrey Atherton, Richard Russel, Thomas Danforth, Royal Clap, and Richard Cook, were appointed referees, by the general court, and afterwards by the consent of the contending parties. These commissioners came to Dedham in February, 1659, and made a formal award, which they support by several quotations of scripture. They award to ensign Philips and other aggrieved persons, twelve more cow common rights; and that the church, for the purpose of supporting a teacher, should have eight more, making the whole number, five hundred and twenty-two. The parties acquiesced in this decision, and the selectmen immediately agreeably to the rule thus finally settled, assigned to the eighty proprietors their due shares. The commissioners further awarded, that in all future measures, in managing the proprietary, the majority in interest should govern. Thus after this decision, there were two distinct bodies. The proprietors and inhabitants, including non-proprietors. But for many years this distinction existed only in theory, for there were not any persons for many years in the town, who were inhabitants and at the same time non-proprietors. In process of time, the two separate bodies had meetings on the same day, and their doings were recorded in the same book. The commissioners mention that many places had almost been ruined by disputes occasioned by a division of lands.

Extinguishment of Indian titles.—The land was granted to the first settlers, subject to the Indian title. They were bound by a law of the colony, as well as by their own sense of right, to extinguish that title, by equitable contract. It is pleasing to find how fully and fairly this was done.

In 1660, two agents are appointed to treat with the

Sagamores who owned Wollomonopoag, now Wrentham. In 1662, Richard Ellis and Timothy Dwight, the agents appointed for that purpose, made a report, that they had made a treaty with Philip the Sagamore, for lands six miles square, or as much as six miles square, at Wollomonopoag, and exhibited his deed thereof, under hand and seal. Six days after this report is made, the town ratify the treaty and assess their common rights, to the amount of twenty-four pounds ten shillings, for the purpose of paying king Philip the stipulated price for his deed. This treaty required five years of negotiation, as appears by the records. Our commissioners were assisted in this business by captain Thomas Willet, of Sekonk, a gentleman very useful to the early colonists, in many employments.

“In November, 1669, upon notice of Philip, sagamore of Mount Hope, now at Wollomonopoag, offering a treaty of his lands thereabouts, not yet purchased.” The selectmen appoint Timothy Dwight, and four other persons, to repair to him on the morrow, with authority to treat with him for his remaining right thereabouts, provided he can show that he has any, and provided he will secure the town against future claims of other sachems.

At this time the first grant of six miles square had not been located; possibly however the boundaries may have been fixed in the deed. Tradition informs us that in this second treaty, king Philip showed the Dedham commissioners the northern boundaries of his kingdom, which was the southern boundary of the sachemdom of Chickatabot, which was somewhere in the town of Walpole, and actually traced out the line, beginning at a point north east of the Wollomonopoag hill in Wrentham, then going westerly in a circuit, round that point, and that the shape of land in the second grant, was somewhat like that of a new moon, inclosing a part of the first grant within its horns. Why any land, especially a narrow strip, should have been reserved to Philip in this place, is not easily accounted for. Probably none was really reserved; but that wary chief, finding that the inhabitants were willing to purchase and prompt to pay, was willing to make an experiment. By this time he had learned that the white people would at all events possess his lands, and the only thing he could do, was then to procure as much money for

his lands as he could. Besides, he might well calculate that the inhabitants would prefer to purchase a doubtful title, rather than that a powerful sagamore should have a plausible pretext for a quarrel. On the 15th of November, 1669, the town ordered the common rights to be assessed seventeen pounds eight shillings, to complete the payment of this second purchase of Philip.

The Indian titles to Dedham and Medfield.—The sachems of the Neponset tribe claimed the territory west of the river Neponset, bounded northerly by Charles river, and southerly on king Philip's land. I find no deed nor treaty for the title to Dedham, but it must be inferred that a purchase was actually made. For in the year 1684, a committee appointed to treat with the Indian sachem Josias, for a parcel of land south of Neponset river, near the saw mills, *and to procure from him a confirmation of all the lands between that and Charles river.* The purchase was made with Messrs. Dudley and Stoughton, the guardians of Josias. And five pounds given for the claim.

The Indian title to the land in Medfield was purchased of Chickatabot; it was afterwards again purchased of his grand-son, Josias, in 1685, for the consideration of four pounds ten shillings.*

William Nehoiden and Magus' titles.—In April, 1680, the town agreed to give William Nehoiden ten pounds in money, forty shillings in Indian corn, forty acres of land at the upper falls on Charles river, for a tract of land seven miles long, from east to west, on the north side of Charles river, and five miles wide.

In the same year, they gave Magus, another sachem, eight pounds, three in Indian corn, and five in money, for his lands about Magus hill. Thus was the Indian title to Natick, Needham, and Dedham island extinguished.

In 1681, the town voted that all deeds and other writings relating to the town rights, should be collected for the purpose of being more carefully preserved. After this vote had been duly published, captain Fisher and Timothy Dwight brought to the selectmen seven Indian deeds, four from the Indians at Petumtuck, one from Philip, one from Nehoiden, one from Magus, and a receipt from Philip. These writings were ordered to be deposited in a box kept

* Dr. Saunders' sermon, preached at Medfield, January 5. 1817.

by deacon Aldis for that purpose. I cannot find that any of these deeds were recorded in the town records, or that they are now in existence. These purchases were made with much difficulty, and some of them required many years of negotiation. The purchases were for a sufficient consideration. No white man could overreach Philip. Josias was under the guardianship of governor Dudley and Mr. Stoughton, and advised by his counsellors, old Ahawton, William Ahawton, and Robert Momontage. The interests of the Naticks were protected by general Gookins, and Mr. Eliot.

Settlements begun in other towns.—When the general court granted so large a tract of land as it did, to the first inhabitants, it virtually imposed on them the duty of beginning new settlements in different places, within their territory, whenever circumstances would permit it to be done.

The well being of the colony required that every new settlement to be made in the wilderness, should be undertaken by a sufficient number of persons, by men of orthodox opinions in religion, of competent abilities, and under such other encouraging circumstances as would justify the attempt. How well the principal men of this plantation acquitted themselves, in performing this difficult and important duty, we shall see.

Medfield.—Medfield was the first town settled by the Dedham proprietors. In 1640, Dedham granted to Edward Allyne, 300 acres at Bargarstowe, (so spelled,) where he should chose to have the land, with fifty acres of meadow. This grant was not located until 1649, when it was done by an order of the town, under the direction of major Lusher, and two others. Mr. Allyne was then dead.—This gentleman died in Boston, in 1642. The petition to the general court in 1649, for the grant of a township by Edward Allyne and others, as asserted by Dr. Saunders' sermon, is so far incorrect, that it was probably the heirs of Edward Allyne who were among the petitioners, and not Edward Allyne himself, as asserted.

In January, 1650, the town of Dedham consented without any objection, to the incorporation of Medfield, and then transferred all its right to the soil, and its jurisdiction to that town.

Ralph Wheelock and Robert Hinsdale, of the first eight admitted into the Dedham church, were among the first settlers. Mr. Wheelock had been a candidate for ruling elder. The character of all the settlers were such that all stipulations for the support of religion and education were unnecessary. After an amicable negotiation of one or two years, Medfield, by their commissioners, Thomas Parsons, Robert Hinsdale, Henry Adams, and George Barber, agreed to pay Dedham fifty pounds, in two years, for all its rights in the lands in Medfield.

Wrentham.—In 1660, a committee previously appointed, report to the town that they had been to view the lands at Wollomonopoag, and recommend a settlement there. A committee is then appointed to make regulations for the proposed plantation. The next year, the town order six hundred acres to be laid down at that place to encourage a plantation there, and a committee of five persons, of which major Lusher is chairman, is appointed to regulate the business. The committee is authorised to determine who were suitable persons to be entrusted with the government of the new settlement. To locate the village to be built. To designate the place for a meeting house, and to establish highways.

In 1661, the proprietors of Dedham voted to sell all their uplands and meadows at Wollomonopoag, *to such persons as are "fit to carry on the work of a plantation in church and commonwealth,"* for the consideration of one hundred and sixty pounds, to be paid by installments, in four years. The next year, the town voted to suspend the settlement for the present. Previous to this, the following persons had already begun a settlement. Anthony Fisher, Sargent Ellis, Robert Ware, James Thorp, Isaac Bullard, Samuel Fisher, Samuel Parker, John Farrington, Ralph Freeman, and Sargent Stevens. When these men were prohibited from proceeding in the settlement, a question arose who should possess the 600 acres, appropriated for the encouragement of the plantation. It was claimed exclusively by those who had begun the plantation. The vote devoting six hundred acres for that purpose, was indeed indefinite, but it must have encouraged the expectation, that it was a donation—the town determined otherwise. But the sufferers, by this unsuccessful attempt to make a settlement.

were partially or entirely indemnified. The records do not state why the settlement was suspended, but it is pretty evident that a sufficient number of orthodox and able men did not volunteer at first in that enterprise. In the language of the town vote, the persons were not fit for the work of church and commonwealth. In 1672, it appears thirty-four persons owned all the lands at Wrentham, by an assessment on their common rights in that town. By this time, the number and ability of the inhabitants were sufficient to support the plantation. They could then comply with the condition in the grant. They were of sufficient numbers and capacity to carry on the work of church and commonwealth, in the opinion of the general court. They were incorporated into a township in the year 1673. In the succeeding year, the proprietors of Dedham transferred all their records relating to Wrentham, to the inhabitants in that place.

Deerfield, (called Petuntuck, in the records.)—When the general court ordered two thousand acres of land, within the grant to Dedham, to be appropriated for an Indian village at Natick; it granted at the same time to the proprietors of this town, as a compensation therefore, 8000 acres of any unlocated lands within the jurisdiction, wherever they might chose to have the land.

In 1663, messengers were sent out by the town, to examine the chesnut country, (so called in the records, probably some part of Worcester county,) near Lancaster.—On their return, they reported that the land was tolerably good, but hard to bring under cultivation, and there was not there a sufficiency of meadow. Soon after this report was made, John Fairbanks informed the selectmen, that there was some very good land about twelve miles from Hadley, where the 8000 acres might be located. Whereupon the selectmen immediately sent out John Fairbanks and lieutenant Daniel Fisher, to discover the land and examine it. These men were instructed first to go to Sudbury and enquire of ensign Noys, and if necessary, then go to Lancaster, to enquire of Good Willard respecting the land. On their return, they reported that they had found the land sought after, that it was exceedingly good, and ought as soon as possible, be taken possession of under the grant. He who has seen the fertile intervalles on Deerfield river,

or heard of the famous fat cattle annually brought thence to the Brighton market, or recollects the subsequent events of Indian warfare at that place, can hardly suppress in his imagination, the glowing and interesting account the returning messengers would give of that country. Lieutenant Fisher we may suppose would say, on this occasion, after having given his account of wandering many days in the hilly country, covered with great trees of oak and chesnut, and having described the only settlements of white men seen on his journey, Sudbury, Lancaster, and Hadley, "We at length arrived at the place we sought after. We called it Petumtuck, because there dwell the Petumtuck Indians. Having ascended a little hill, apparently surrounded by rich meadow land, from that spot we beheld broad meadows, extending far north, west, and south of us. In these meadows we could trace the course of a fine river, which comes out from the mountains on the north west, and running northerly, through many miles of meadow, seemed to us to run in among the hills again, at the north east. The tall trees of button wood and elm, exposed to us its course. That meadow is not soft and covered with coarse water grass, like that around us here, but is hard land. It is the best land that we have seen in this colony; we dug holes in the meadow, with the intent to find the depth of the soil, but could not find the bottom. At the foot of the little hill we stood on, is a plat of ground sufficiently large to build a village upon, and sufficiently high to be out of the reach of the spring floods. Providence led us to that place? It is indeed far away from our plantations, and the *Canaanites and Amalekites dwell in that valley*, and if they have any attachment to any spot on earth, must delight to live there. But that land must be ours. Our people have resolute and pious hearts, and strong hands to overcome all difficulties. Let us go and possess the land, and in a few years you will hear more boast of it in this colony, as a land good for flocks and herds, than could ever be justly said of the land of Goshen, or any part of the land of Canaan."

When the town heard this report, it immediately appointed six persons to repair to Petumtuck, and cause the 3000 acres to be located there. Captain John Pyncheon, of Springfield, was employed by the town to purchase those lands of the Indians. He soon after performed that

duty, and procured four deeds from the Indians, which deeds were afterwards deposited in deacon Aldis' box.—Dedham gave ninety-four pounds ten shillings for these deeds; which sum was procured by an assessment on the common rights in the Dedham proprietary.

In 1670, the proprietors of Petuntuck met at Dedham. Their whole number was twenty-six. Captain John Pynchon, Samuel Hinsdale, John Stebbins, John Hulburt, and Sampson Frarey, among the proprietors, were never inhabitants of Dedham. The remaining part of the proprietors were inhabitants of this town.

This meeting voted to employ an artist to lay out lots to each proprietor. To present a correct plan to the town of Dedham. A committee of three was appointed to give instructions to the artist, to designate the place for a town, and determine where the meeting house should be built. To locate the church officers' lot, to make a fair assignment of lots to the proprietors.

In 1672, Samuel Hinsdale, on behalf of Petuntuck, petitions Dedham to appoint suitable persons a committee to regulate affairs at the former place. The next year he renewed his petition, and urged the distresses of his friends, by means of their remote situation from other settlements. Then five persons are immediately authorised,

1st, To admit suitable inhabitants by purchasing lands or otherwise.

2d, To make orders about herding cattle, and keeping swine.

3d, To regulate fences.

4th, To hire an orthodox minister with the concurrence of the elders of two adjoining churches, and for that purpose, to assess two shillings on each common right at Petuntuck.

What compensation was given to Dedham for their rights in the lands at Petumbuck, does not appear. As that town was owned by the Dedham proprietors, in such portions and shares as were denoted by the common rights in Dedham proprietary, the purchase was made of each cotenant by each cotenant of the Petuntuck lands.

This is the beginning of Deerfield, which is much celebrated for its rich meadows, formed by the junction of Deerfield river with the Connecticut, for the great number of cattle which are annually fattened there, exceeding both

in number and size that of any other town in New England of equal extent. The mountain scenery there is delightful. There too are shown the battle grounds, where the unfortunate Petumtucks contended with the inhabitants for their inheritance, after they had sold it for a fair price.

Indian village at Natick.—The reverend John Eliot, the minister of Roxbury, first proposed the attempt to convert the natives of this country to civilization and christianity. In the year 1646, he began to instruct that portion of the Massachusetts tribe, which resided at that time at a place called Nonantum, within the present town of Newton.—There he met with success in the conversion of some Indians, and among others, of Waban, a wise and grave man of that tribe. Some progress was there made in building a village, but in a few years it was abandoned. Mr. Eliot ever maintained the opinion that the Indians could not become christians, unless they were first civilized. He therefore proposed that the Indians of Nonantum should be collected into a village, in a more convenient place than their present one; and designated a place on Charles river, then within the limits of Dedham, and ten miles west of the village in this town, since called Natick, an Indian word which signifies *a place of hills*. When this measure was proposed to the general court, Dedham readily consented to it, and sent their agents there to express its concurrence. The general court granted 2000 acres for the Indian town in 1651. It is asserted by those who described that town afterwards, that it contained about 6000 acres. In the year 1659, Dedham appointed nine persons to define the limits of the Indian town. But these men of the woods, who had wandered over an indefinite extent of territory, and who very imperfectly understood the English notion of land-marks, were not all at once to be confined to one place, defined only by imaginary lines, and marked trees. They would not agree on bounds. They would not meet the Dedham committee. When boundaries were at last fixed, they disregarded them, and committed trespasses on the lands belonging to Dedham, and much litigation and trouble ensued from these causes.

The Naticks, so the tribe was afterwards called, soon built a little town, which had three long streets, two on

the north of Charles river, and one on the south of it. Each family had a house lot. Most of the houses were built in the Indian style, the principal materials of which were poles set in the ground and covered with pealed bark. The few built in the manner of English houses, were less perfect and comfortable. There was one large house, the lower room of which answered the double purpose of a school room, and a meeting house. In the second story, the Indians deposited their skins and their other valuable things. In the corner of the second story, Mr. Eliot had a little room partitioned off, in which he had a bed. These Indians were supplied with spades, hoes, axes, and all other tools necessary for the improvement of their land. Mr. Eliot recommended to them a form of government, similar to a model in Exodus, and they actually chose rulers of tens, of fifties, and hundreds. But these rulers were to be approved by a superior authority. To aid this imperfect Indian government, an English magistrate was appointed to hold a court among them. This magistrate in fact appointed the Indian rulers. That is, men to decide small causes, constables, and marshals; and had the same authority as a court of common pleas in all judicial matters.

The general court from time to time, made laws for the purpose of regulating the Indian towns, guarding them against various evils, and protecting their rights. Their great and devoted patron, Mr. Eliot, taught that portion of the tribe who would hear him, the doctrines of the christian religion, by addressing them in their own language. He translated the bible into their own language, and to prepare them for better understanding the lessons taught, schools were established for their children, and in the summer season, once every fortnight, he was present to teach some of his Indian disciples the art of rightly employing their understandings, by which means several persons of this tribe were prepared to become teachers.

As an almost unconquerable aversion to labor, is the Indian's great sin, the English magistrate among them was commanded to encourage industry by rewards and penalties. In the year 1670, the Indian church at Natick had two teachers, John and Anthony, and from forty to fifty communicants. They observed the sabbath. Some of them could read, some could read and write, and rehearse

the catechism. These flattering prospects inspired strong hopes that the noble efforts made for their conversion, would be successful, but this account thus far, is that of general Gookins and Mr. Eliot, by whose great exertions, these favorable effects were produced, and by whose zeal, they were perhaps favorably represented.* The reverend Stephen Badger, minister of Natick, in the year 1797, in a letter to the historical society,† writes the last chapter of the history of this tribe. The remnant of that tribe had been under his parochial care; but he could find no records or written evidence of their former doings. The full bloods of that tribe did not then exceed twenty, and they were dispersed. The causes of their decay were numerous. The attempt to force them into civilization, broke down their spirit. Their conscious inferiority in all their attempts to imitate white men, degraded them in their own estimation. Their aversion to labor, their strong propensity to a wandering life, their strong thirst for ardent spirits, their natural improvidence, are causes which have contributed to their downfall. In the beginning of the last century, the tribe was in a civilized state. Some of the tribe held up their heads and thought something of themselves. They had civil officers of their own, they had a training company, organized in the English manner, with proper officers, who had their proper titles, but no commissions. But their trainings soon degenerated into drunken frolics, and were suppressed. The doctrines of christianity never made a deep impression on their minds, although there have been men among them of sober and christian lives. Such was Waban. Such was deacon Ephraim, and several other teachers.

The number of the tribe in 1749, was	-	-	166
" " " " " " 1763, "	-	-	37
" " " " " " 1797, "	-	-	20
" " " " " " 1826, "	-	-	extinct.

This is the result of the most perfect experiment perhaps, that ever has, or ever will be made to civilize the natives of this country. Who has ever made equal exertions to that great and ardent missionary, the reverend John Eliot, who by way of eminence, is called the apostle to

* Historical collections, vol. 1st, 171. vol. 10, 124

† Historical collections, vol. 5. 32.

the Indians. Who will ever possess such opportunities to convert the Indians? They were comfortably settled in a village, on a tract of good land. They had the example of the white men, both to stimulate their exertions by the hopes of present reward, and to teach them the ordinary arts of life. Their former hunting grounds they knew were appropriated to different uses by the English. Gen. Daniel Gookins, the pious and upright superintendent of the Indians, was ardently devoted to their interests, and supported Mr. Eliot in his efforts. The good work of reforming these wild men of the woods, was encouraged by the almost unanimous opinion of the community in their favor, for then no unsuccessful experiment had damped the spirit of christian philanthropy. The true character of the American Indian was not then fully understood.—Alas! if we overlook all their vices, or attribute them to the influence of a peculiar situation, yet by one single trait in their character, that of aversion to labor, they were doomed to sudden decay and final extirpation from the land cultivated by civilized man. If a whole tribe merit a monumental stone, I recommend that it be placed on the Indian burying ground at the foot of Pegan hill, and its inscription may say, “*Here are interred the Naticks, a tribe of native Indians, who were the first of that race to embrace christianity. Soon after their conversion at Nonantum, in 1646, they were collected into a village at this place, by their great patron and missionary, the reverend John Eliot. Here the tribe lived and gradually declined, and became finally extinct before the year 1826.*”

CHAPTER III.

Name of the town. Records. Incorporation. Town-covenant. Town legislature of seven men. By-laws. Wood reeves. The example of a society formed out of its simple elements. Measures to support public worship. Method of supporting ministers. Parish funds. School funds and Schools.

Name of the town.—THE celebrated John Rogers, of Dedham, in England, had been forbidden to preach before our first settlers came to this country. Many of his people emigrated to this country and several to this town. John Dwight and his son Timothy Dwight and John Rogers and John Page were of this number. From this circumstance we may suppose the general court gave to this place the name of Dedham. The inhabitants requested the general court to give it the name of *Contentment*, which name is written over the records of the first several meetings. It appears to me that the word well expresses the leading motives of the first twenty-four settlers in coming into this town. They were soon however associated with men of somewhat a different and higher character.

Records.—Very few towns it is believed have an unbroken series of records from the first commencement of their settlement, at an early period, to the present time. That Dedham has such a set of records must be attributed to the excellent example set by the principal townsmen of the first half century, they first wrote a clear account of all the public acts ; and then carefully preserved the most material of them, by duplicate copies. The second generation had, it is true, hardly sufficient education, even with the help of such good precedents, either to transact the public business or to make a proper record thereof. The records begin, September 1st, 1635, and state every transaction so fully that I have been able to collect this history therefrom. To major Lusher belongs by far the greatest share of this praise. Some of our by-laws, for instance, those relating to wild horses in the woods are in the same language of those in the colony statute book relating to the same subject, although previously made.

September, 1636, nineteen persons presented a petition to the general court, wherein they request a ratification of the former grant to them, and a further grant of all lands above the falls in Charles river and north of it, not before granted and five miles square on the south side of Charles river, and that they may be exempted from country charges four years, and have other encouragement in their non-age. The request was granted with three years exemption from public charges.

Town Covenant.—It was many years before the government of the colony could make a sufficient number of general laws to regulate the plantations. Each town it must be presumed before the enactment of a general law, to regulate their own affairs, made laws for themselves. How Dedham supplied this deficiency we shall see in the account of its town covenant, and by-laws. It did in fact legislate for itself in a great variety of matters. The town covenant, (we should call it in our times, a constitution,) laid the foundation for making legitimate by-laws. The preamble to this instrument begins thus :—“ We whose names are hereunto subscribed, do in the fear and reverence of our Almighty God mutually and severally promise amongst ourselves, and each to other, to profess and practice one faith according to that most perfect rule, the foundation whereof is everlasting love.

“ Secondly, we engage by all means, to keep off from our company such as shall be contrary minded, and receive only such into our society as will in a meek and quiet spirit, promote its temporal and spiritual good.

“ Thirdly, that if any differences arise, the parties shall presently refer all such difference unto one, two or three of the society, to be fully accorded by them.

“ Fourthly, that every man who shall have lots in the town shall pay all such sums for the public charges, as shall be imposed on him rateably, and shall obey all such by-laws and constitutions as the inhabitants shall judge necessary for the management of their temporal affairs, for religion, and for loving society.

“ Fifthly, for the better manifestation of their intentions herein, they subscribe their names, and bind themselves, and their successors forever to the true observance of this covenant.”

There is no date to this instrument, but it was executed before the second act of incorporation, for the petitioners for that act, state that they were at present under covenant. One hundred and twenty-six persons signed this instrument.

Town government composed of seven men.—The inhabitants having thus acquired the right in their aggregate capacity to make laws, for three years exercised it. But as the affairs of the plantation required monthly town meetings, this diverted them from their necessary business; and in 1639, they delegated all their power, to seven men to be annually chosen. The power of these seven men, was as extensive in every respect, as that of the whole town, in legal meeting assembled, excepting in after times they were prohibited from making *free grants, admitting townsmen, and making dividends of the lands.* These seven men kept records of their doings, and inserted them in the town records, and they are recorded promiscuously among the doings of all the proprietors. The seven men met monthly for many years, made many necessary by-laws for the establishment of highways and fences, for the keeping of cattle, and swine, and horses; for keeping proper register of land titles, and of births and marriages; for the support of schools and religion; for additional bounties for killing wolves and wild cats; for the extinguishment of Indian claims. As the by-laws of the society best show its situation, a few are here inserted.

By-Laws.—A committee shall be appointed to examine the characters of new comers, and make report of their inquiries to the town. All persons coming into the town, shall declare their name, and explain their motives. August, 1636.

No person in covenant, shall bring his servant with him and thereby entitle the servant to lots of land—but the servant shall bring testimony of a good character before he is permitted to reside here. August, 1636.

All the waters in town are declared free to all for fishing.

The first settlers, if married men, shall have home lots of 12 acres, and unmarried men 8 acres. 1636.

No man having lots in town shall sell them without leave of the company. 1636.

Absence from town meeting shall be punished by fine, one shilling for the first half hour, and three shillings for the whole meeting. 1637.

A long act is made for the establishment of highways. 1637.

Every house holder shall provide a ladder for his house, under a penalty of five shillings. 1639.

The officers called wood reeves shall be chosen annually, who shall have power to order the burning the herd walks, and give orders concerning the same. To give orders for cutting wood and timber on the common lands. To cause the by-laws respecting ladders to be observed. To collect the penalties for trespasses on the common lands. To view fences, and cause them to be made and repaired.

A lengthy statute provides for the discovery of mines, within the limits of the town. One of its provisions require the finder of a mine to make a report thereof as soon as may be to the selectmen. Two reports were made, one of a copper mine at Wrentham, and another of a bright and shining metal, somewhere near a brook in Natick. There was then a considerable extent of unexplored territory. It was natural where every thing was new, that some heads should be turned on mining projects. Who these men were, I do not know.

Here in the woods at Dedham, a number of strangers met, they had come from various places in England, and had probably acquired some slight knowledge of each others intentions, when they first set out from Watertown, to come into this place. There were then no general laws in the colony to regulate their various interests, or their common enterprizes. It was after the first coming of the first inhabitants to this place, that the general court delegated powers to the selectmen, to execute according to their best discretion, what was afterwards regulated by general statutes. They had the common intent of dwelling in the town. They formed a civil society, out of its first simple elements. They actually did what theorists have conjectured might be done in such a case ; but of which they could never exhibit a well authenticated instance. The colony government originated in a grant from the king. It was the offspring of royalty. It was a gift. The Dedham society originated in a compact, the laws derived their force from the consent of the people. It

was the beginning of the American system of government. It is the first rude specimen of a constitution, which I have seen, although something similar in substance must have taken place in all the early plantations.

Measures to support public worship.—The first settlers not only procured a religious teacher, and built a meeting house, and performed every other act necessary for the immediate establishment of public worship among them; but as they might well fear that a more corrupt age would not be willing to make the necessary exertions for that purpose, they therefore laid the foundation for ministerial funds. When so much other work was to be done, they built a meeting house in 1637. The pitts, (so the pews are called in the records) were five feet deep, and four and a half feet wide. The elders seat, and the deacons seat, were before the pulpit; the communion table stood before these seats, and was so placed that the communicants could approach it in all directions. This house was pulled down in 1672; and one much larger erected on the scite of the old one. This house had three pair of stairs, in three corners of the meeting house. Men were seated in the galleries on one side, and women on the other, the boys in the front gallery. The duty of a tythingman in those days, was arduous, and he received as much pay for his services, many years, as the deputy to the general court. He was obliged to go on errands for the elders, whip the dogs out of the meeting house, and prevent disorder among the boys, who I find whenever they sit together have a strong propensity, like the Pretorian bands, to mutiny and insubordination. The business of seating persons in these two houses, came under the jurisdiction of the elders. The greatest tax payer had the best seat. This was a subject of some difficulty.

Method of supporting ministers.—During Mr. Allin's ministry of thirty-two years, the records do not show any rate assessed for his support. He depended on voluntary contributions, and on the liberal free grants from the proprietors. At his death he was the greatest landholder, (Deacon Chickering excepted) of any in town. All the successors of Mr. Allin, had salaries voted them by the town, although the salary was paid voluntarily by the people without a tax many years.

Funds.—When the Dedham proprietary was divided into five hundred and twenty-two shares, called cow common rights, the proprietors devoted eight of these shares, to the support of a teaching church officer. The shares drew dividends whenever they were made of the common lands, and remained unsold until after the revolution. Since that time, some of these lands have been sold, and the proceeds suffered to accumulate until the amount will afford a good living for one clergyman. These funds now belong to the first parish in Dedham.

School funds and Schools.—In 1644, the inhabitants declare their intention to devote some portion of their lands to the support of schools, and did then grant lands to trustees for the purpose of raising a fund, of the annual income of twenty pounds to support schools, which sum they determined should be the salary of the school master. Before the lands granted could be productive, the town raised by various ways, the sum of twenty pounds to hire a schoolmaster. This regarding the number and situation of the inhabitants is by far the greatest effort that has been made by any of their successors. In 1680, captain Daniel Fisher, and ensign Fuller, report that Dr. William Avery, now of Boston, but formerly of the Dedham church, out of his entire love to this church and town, freely gives into their hands, sixty pounds *for a latin school*, to be ordered by the selectmen and elders. This fund was many years in the hands of trustees, but it was either wrongly appropriated, or discredited by the operations of bills of credit, and there is scarcely a man who knows that such a donation was ever made. In 1695, the owners of the Dedham proprietary granted to trustees 300 acres of their best lands at Needham, to support schools, to be called the school farm. This farm was afterwards sold by order of the town to defray its ordinary expenses, and a vote made to indemnify the agents for so doing. In thirty years from this sale, the town instructed a committee to recover the school farm, and voted a larger sum to support a lawsuit for the recovery of it, than the compensation received for it. This was not done until a second and third generation, badly educated, and unmindful of the great duty of instructing themselves had appeared. The first school house was built in 1648. The masters salary, until 1695, was twenty pounds; it was then raised to twenty-five pounds.

CHAPTER IV.

Building mills. Corn mills. Water mills. Saw mill. Introduction of trades. Modes of cultivating the land. First articles carried to Boston market. Stock of cattle. Horses. Swine. Sheep. Wolves. Wild cats.

GOVERNOR WINTHROP foresaw that when a small company of men went into the wilderness to begin a plantation, it would be many years before they could erect a water mill. He therefore gave orders for bringing into the colony, those small corn mills which had stones from two to three feet diameter, and were turned by hand, and which might be easily transported. The stones of two of these corn mills are still remaining in town. *A corn mill* seems to have been the appropriate name for this little hand grist mill, to distinguish it from the larger grist mill, driven by water, which was called a water mill.

First water mill.—The origin of Mother Brook has already been described. The chief design of cutting that canal, was to create a suitable dam for a water mill, for at the same meeting, March 28, 1639, the town granted liberty to any one who would undertake it, to build a water mill on that stream, with a lot of land around it. Who availed themselves of this grant, does not directly appear. In 1641, a foot path is laid out to the mill. Soon after the foot path was made, John Dwight and the reverend John Allin, conveyed the mill to Nathaniel Whiting. He and his heirs have possessed that mill privilege until Benjamin Bussey, Esq. purchased it within a few years.

In 1664, the town granted a license to Ezra Morse, to erect a new corn mill on Mother Brook, above the old one, on or near the factory built by the Norfolk cotton factory. The mill was erected, but it interfered with the rights of Whiting, and a dispute arose which resulted in the abatement of the new dam. So early did litigation about mill privileges commence. Within a few years the conflicting claims appurtenant to this mill seat, have been settled by a lawsuit. The town has at different times appointed

committees to lower the water in Charles river. I quote a passage from the records relating to this subject, to show what our provident forefathers have done for their posterity. In October, 1686. "Inasmuch as damage did come to the town by water lying long on the meadows, we saw reason to lower Charles river, but in this extreme drought, the town and the millers suffering so much, we see reason to allow that we may have a supply of meal, that the river about forty rods below the mill channel's mouth, be raised to its former height."

A *saw mill* was built by Joshua Fisher, on Neponset river, in the year 1664. The town granted him ample privileges to encourage that enterprise. It was quite on the southern boundary of the present town. The town stipulated with him for the price of sawing timber. When Ezra Morse was driven from Mother Brook, the town granted him a mill privilege at the saw mill, with much land about it. His thriving posterity now possess that inheritance.

In 1681, a fulling mill was built on Mother Brook, by Draper and Fairbanks.

Introduction of Mechanics.—The society which has not a joiner, a carpenter, a blacksmith, or a shoemaker, must necessarily be very deficient in articles of the first necessity. It was however several years before any of these kind of artificers came into the town. The number of carpenters, joiners and masons in the colony were so small, compared to the demand for their services, that they demanded enormous wages, and were principally employed in Boston and near it. It is an obvious fact therefore, that the first houses in Dedham were chiefly built without them. We may easily perceive in the peculiar situation of the town, in its infancy, the reason why every sort of mechanical business would be little successful. At Boston was the only market for the few productions of the land, and there would the inhabitants of course buy to the best advantage, the articles most necessary. This cause continued to operate until there was a considerable amount of circulating medium. Thence Dedham remained for a hundred and fifty years, a mere agricultural people, having extremely few inhabitants of other pursuits.

Methods of cultivating the land.—Excepting the home lots, all the lands cultivated, were inclosed in common fields. The common plough field, of two hundred acres, on the village plain, was surrounded by a fence made at common charge. The wood reeves decided the number of rods of fence to be made by each owner. This field was every year to be cleared by the 12th of October, that the cattle might be turned into it. There was for many years a great deficiency of English grass, which circumstance, in some seasons, produced great distress, by means of water on the meadows, as in 1649. Wheat continued to be raised until the year 1700, but I suppose it was only on newly cleared land. Until this time, the people voted by wheat and beans on the question of admitting townsmen—wheat denoting the affirmative, and beans the negative. Wheat before that time was a legal tender in the payment of some part of the taxes, and of most of the contracts.

The practice of burning the cow commons continued many years. This must have rendered those lands barren in a short time, provided these annual fires had much burned the soil.

I mention the articles carried into the Boston market, in the order in which they seem first to have been the subject of trade. Pealed oak bark, hoop poles, oak and pine timber for building, oak staves, ship timber, charcoal, wood, and then vegetables, and carried in panniers. It must have been many years before wood for fuel was carried to Boston. The bad and circuitous roads did not admit much of that article into the market from this town, until 1780.

Herds of cattle.—In the summer, the working oxen and cows fed on the commons near home. The young cattle, either fed in the woods, or on Neponset meadows, in Mr. Stoughton's pasture. The horses likewise run in a kind of wild state in the woods, and were extremely mischievous, although fettered, they frequently broke into the corn-fields, and other enclosures, as our by-laws state. The horse of those days, was no doubt a small and inferior animal compared to the grain fed and improved breed of the present time. He felt, in common with the inhabitants, the want of a more perfect cultivation of the country; he had not even a pasture—he was doomed to live in

the woods, and wear fetters, and submit to a degrading slavery, without its usual benefits. *Swine*, with great yokes on their necks, likewise ran wild in the woods, and lived on acorns and roots. When hogs are kept in the woods, they soon become wild, and are active animals, very different from that lazy stupid creature in our sties. Hubbard, the historian, says that "In November, 1677, a great black boar came into the town of Dedham, no body knows from whence, eight feet in length. He was shot thirteen times before he could be killed. Almost the whole town was mustered together before he could be mastered.*

Sheep were not introduced into the town before the year 1667. They required more care than any other stock. They were at first kept in a town flock, as it was called, under the care of a shepherd. The wild beasts and numerous hungry dogs, rendered it necessary to guard them carefully. When the sheep were put into the common, it seems that additional bounties for killing wolves became necessary. These troublesome enemies of a new settlement, continued to annoy the inhabitants so late as 1698. Soon after its first settlement, a bounty of ten shillings was offered by the town, for every wolf killed, and this bounty was received almost every year, for one to five wolves. In 1698, the bounty was increased to ten shillings more for each wolf, and an unusual number was then destroyed, by which means the whole race in this wilderness was annihilated. In 1734, a bounty of twenty shillings was offered for each wild cat; fifteen were soon destroyed, and I hear of no complaints before or after that period, of wild cats. So long as these wild beasts lived on the borders of the wilderness, so long would many timid persons indulge a fear, perhaps a groundless one, that their children or their friends might be destroyed by them. Such apprehensions they have expressed, by pointing out the most dangerous haunts, by the names they have given to places, as *wolf's den*, *wolf's pit*, *wild cat swamp*. The famous hunters in those days, Sargent Ellis and deacon Ephraim Wilson, merited and no doubt enjoyed the reputation of being real patriots.

CHAPTER V.

First company, twenty-four. Second company, twelve. Increase in fifty years. Compendium of the doings and improvements of fifty years. Indian war. Character of the first generation. Principal men, Edward Allyn, John Allin, Eleazer Lusher, Daniel Fisher, Timothy Dwight. Reflections.

THE first comers to the Massachusetts colony during the first five or six years, crowded into Boston and a few adjoining towns, particularly into Roxbury and Watertown. In Winthrop's journal, under date of April, 1635, it is asserted "Those of Watertown and Roxbury had leave to remove whether they pleased in this jurisdiction. The occasion of their desire to remove was, all the towns in the bay began to be much straitened by their own nearness to one another, and their cattle being much increased."* Then began the inhabitants to form new companies to settle other places. Several went out of the Watertown live.

From that place also, came nearly all the first twenty-four persons who settled in this town. This company of men seem from their subsequent conduct, to have been a portion of that mixed population collected at Watertown, who possessed good sense and moderate principles, and were desirous of forming a peaceable civil society. They were puritans, but by no means of high proof. This company did in substance at least say to their fellow townsmen, whom they were about to leave, "Let there be no strife between us and thee, and between thy herdsmen and our herdsmen, for we be brethren, if you go to the right we will go to the left, for is not the whole country before us?"

Under date of September 1, 1635, in Winthrop's journal, it is stated, that a town is begun above the falls in Charles river. No other place than Dedham could have been intended. That was the time when the first town meeting was held. There were that day twelve persons assembled. The next year, November, 1636, their numbers had increased to nineteen; they had then formed the town cove-

* Winthrop, 160.

nant, and petitioned the general court for an enlargement of their former grant for a township. The name of the petitioners are Edward Allyne, Abraham Shaw, Samuel Morse, Philemon Dalton, Ezekiel Holliman, John Kingsbury, John Dwite, John Cooledge, Richard Ewed, John Howard, Lambert Genere, Nicholas Phillips, Ralph Shepard, John Gay, Thomas Bartleet, Francis Austin, John Rogers, Joseph Shaw, and Wilkin Bearstowe. Others very soon came from Watertown and settled here.

July, 1637. Came to Dedham John Allin, Eleazer Lusher, and ten other persons, bringing recommendations, and were at the same time admitted townsmen. These twelve persons gave a more decided character to the whole company. The eight persons who formed the Dedham church, and who by way of distinction, were called the *founders* of it, came in this company, (Edward Allyne excepted.) Ezekiel Holliman, before named, obtained leave of the town at the same meeting, to sell his lots in town, and I do not again see his name on the records. This circumstance confirms the opinion, that this is the same person who afterwards was a baptist minister at Providence, and attached to Roger Williams. He had been tried for heresy before this time, but he might reasonably have calculated to live in peace with the first company in this town, but the second he might anticipate would not be so indulgent to his heretical opinions.

In 1642, the number of persons taxed, was - - 61

" 1666, " " " " " " - - 95

" 1676, " " " " " " - - 95

The war with king Philip, induced some to go to Boston.

In 1686, the number had increased to - - - 124

These I believe were all Englishmen, excepting one man, who when he was admitted a townsman, was called Smith, the Irishman. They came at different times, from different parts of England, and were with a few exceptions, husbandmen.

Henry Phillips came to Dedham from Watertown, and was solicited to become a candidate for the ministry, he chose however to be a candidate in another place, but some events prevented his settlement in any town, and he became, as our church records say, a discouraged and broken hearted christian. Mather inserts his name among the ministers, and as a resident of Dedham. I find no

man by the name of Phillips, who could be alluded to, excepting the Mr. Phillips above mentioned, and who had a dispute with the inhabitants about the cow commons. Thomas Carter was sometime a member of the Dedham church, who was afterwards minister of Woburn. Michael Powel kept the ordinary in Dedham and had several lots of land; one of the little patches of upland in Charles meadow was called Powel's island. He was a candidate afterwards for the ministry in the second church in Boston.*

What these men did during the first fifty years, has been partly related; what other things they did and suffered, must be stated in a few words. During that time they made many miles of new roads, among the great roots and fast rocks in the woods; made two bridges over Charles river, and several other bridges; cut a canal for the channel of Mother Brook, cleared off the wood probably of 2000 acres, and brought a part of it under cultivation; erected mills, built two meeting houses, and two school houses, laid a noble foundation for ministerial and school funds, and made greater exertions than any of their successors to support school masters and ministers. They made expensive treaties with the native chiefs for the extinguishment of their titles; caused new settlements to be begun in three new towns; and what is of more merit than all perhaps, established here a peaceable christian community, exempt from the disputes of other places; harmonious in all their enterprises, and gradually rising on a stable foundation. This is a bright page, and it is a faithful one. The comparative amount of the things done, is trifling—they are principally worthy of notice only as they furnish a good illustration of character.

Indian war.—In September, 1673, the selectmen received orders from the general court to put the town in a posture of war. Then immediately the soldiers are called out, and have frequent trainings. A barrel of powder and other ammunition is procured, the great gun is put on wheels. The new meeting house is made a depository of these warlike stores. The people build a garrison, and set a watch. The fear excited was great, for many on that account fled to Boston. Mr. Adams mentions this circum-

* Winthrop, vol. 2. p. 323. in note

stance, as a reason for relinquishing a part of his salary at that time. Dedham was well situated for defence. The town had been built in a compact manner, that it might be prepared for Indian hostilities. Little river and Charles river on the north, would make the savages unwilling to approach in that direction. The plain all around Dedham, was to a considerable extent cleared and level, and overlooked by a person in the belfrey of the new meeting house. To this circumstance it may probably be owing, that none of the parties of Philip made an assault on the town. It was no doubt reconnoitered by his spies, and had it been unprepared, might have shared the fate of Medfield and other places. The Indians in town were ordered to depart, and go either to Natick, or Neponset, or Wamomet. An enormous war tax was imposed on the inhabitants, which exceeded one shilling for every pound of valuation of estate.

In the spring of the year 1676, the troops of the colonists became very enterprising in pursuing and destroying the small parties of Indians in various parts of the country. Philip himself, the generalissimo of all the Indian forces, was soon discovered and slain at Mount Hope. Captain Church, with a company of men, visited the Narraganset country, the seat of that tribe, then under the great sachem, Pomham. But this chief, either having notice of captain Church's designs, or justly fearing an attack from other colonists, fled into the wilderness. The next information we have of Pomham is, that he and his party are in the woods near Dedham. Cotton Mather gives the following account of him. July 25, 1678, thirty-six Englishmen, from Dedham and Medfield, with ninety christian Indians, pursued, overtook and captured fifty Indians without losing a man. Among these was Pomham, a great sachem of the Narragansets, who after he was wounded so that he could not stand, but was left for dead, the *dying beast with belluine rage*, got such hold of an Englishman, who came up to him, that he had killed him unless he had had assistance.* What design brought Pomham so near Dedham at this time, cannot even be conjectured; perhaps he had no rational motive, for the Indians as soon as their own country was attacked, seem to have lost their under-

* Magnalia, 2 vol. 497.

standings, and were so amazed that they wandered in the woods careless of the fate which awaited them, and were destroyed without making much opposition.

Character of the first generation.—Dedham plantation during many years, was a little community governed principally by its own laws, and having little connexion with other people. They were a company selected from the first emigrants into Massachusetts. As moderate puritans, they were inclined to go southward towards a country, where Mr. Blackstone and Roger Williams were compelled to flee from intolerance. The excellent men in the plantation, would naturally attract to it persons of a similar character. It was no place for a wrong head or a bigot, or an enthusiast. It was no place for a display of any kind. A peaceable loving civil society was the great object of the people. They were willing to keep aloof from the nice questions involved in the antinomian and other theological controversies. In this respect they exhibited a contrast with some other settlements. They at first asserted the rights of conscience, and in no instance which I can discover, attempted to violate that right in others. The preface to the church records fully asserts the doctrine of religious liberty, as it is now understood. It modestly states "That the proceedings herein set down may be of some use in after times: no way intending hereby to bind the conscience of any to walk by this pattern, any farther than it may appear to be agreeable to the rule of the gospel." When the church was about to be organized, governor Winthrop sent word to Mr. Allin, that it must not be done without the approbation of the magistrates. This excited alarm, lest this claim of jurisdiction by the civil rulers, "should be prejudicial to God's people; and some seeds of usurpation upon the liberties of the gospel." I cannot find any evidence that any inhabitant in this town was ever deluded with the notions and errors of some of the first inhabitants settled in Boston and in Essex county. Mr. Norton's book, and the general court's proclamations against the quakers, were sent to Dedham, but there the matter ended.

The grand jury in 1675, threatened to prosecute the selectmen if they did not cause the law against excess in apparel to be observed. I cannot discover that afterwards

silk hoods and ribbons, were stripped from the heads of the women, or that great boots were prosecuted as that law required. The language first spoken in the town, was that of republicans. Church and commonwealth, rights of the colony, freemen and the rights of freemen, are words frequently seen in the records. The phrases, loyalty, subject, your majesty, and your majesty's pleasure, are not used, except for the purpose of showing dislike to the things thereby expressed. The first time I notice the word majesty, in the records, it is used to record this unanimous opinion of the inhabitants. "This day, January 30, 1683, it was put to vote of the freemen and other inhabitants, whether they did desire the governor and company would defend their characters and privileges, so far as they can. Voted, by all, in the affirmative. It being put to them, whether they are willing to make a full submission and entire resignation to his majesty's pleasure. Voted, by all, in the negative."

These expressions of opinion of the inhabitants, were caused by the proposition made to this and all other towns in the colony, at this time by the general court, thus to declare it. The ministers of king James the second, had demanded a surrender of the charter; and the general court was desirous of being supported in their refusal of that demand, by these town meeting resolves. The town we may believe was very strong in these resolutions; since their deputy, captain Daniel Fisher, acted a conspicuous part in the struggles to maintain the charter, and did no doubt animate his constituents with the same spirit for which he was much distinguished. Here in the very origin of the town, a strong predilection for republican government was manifest; and we shall see as we proceed that every succeeding event and revolution, contributed to strengthen it. In this particular, Dedham did not differ from the other towns. These traits in the character of its people, are worthy of notice, principally because they are a pretty good example to show the origin and progress of public opinions in relation to the principles of government.

In Mr. Savage's list of freemen who had been admitted previous to the year 1647, which list is in the appendix to the second volume of Winthrop's journal, I count the names of fifty men who had been admitted townsmen of Dedham. A list of these fifty I will insert in the tenth

chapter. The number of non-freemen who had become inhabitants of the town before that time, was nearly the same. Several of the non-freemen were appointed to offices in the town. John Fairbanks is an instance ; he could not become a freeman because he could not conscientiously make a public profession of faith in the manner required of him by the church.

Among the other usual titles added to the names of men in these early days, the records show that *sir*, was the school master's title. Sir Metcalf, Sir Woodward, and Sir Dwight. These titles were applied to those school masters only, who were employed the whole year, and were so by profession. If it was intended to make the very useful and honorable employment of school master, a stepping stone to a species of knighthood, should we smile at it? Our modern addition of *honorable*, which is connected with so many degrees of dignity and variety of employment, cannot be better supported on the ground of reason alone. The scrupulous attention to titles, civil and military, even down to that of sergeant, in our records, may excite some attention. Yet even when this regard to titles was greatest, I do not find so many persons dignified with the name of *mister*, as are now in the town entitled to the addition of *honorable*.

However different might be the characters of the first settlers, when they were collected into a society here, united by mutual wants and common pursuits, the prevailing traits of their character would soon predominate, and the leading men would in such a state of things as then existed, communicate a large share of their own character to the rest of the community. It becomes proper therefore to give a short account of their lives and characters.

Edward Allyne was the principal man in the first company who came from Watertown. He wrote the first records. The town covenant was probably the work of his hands. He was not admitted into the Dedham church without difficulty and objections to his conduct in England. But these objections were removed as soon as he could procure evidence from England. It appears that Mr. Allyne intended to begin a settlement at Medfield, for he procured a grant of a considerable tract of land there, but before that plantation was begun, he died at Boston, 1642.

Reverend John Allin, (so spelled by him) came to Ded-

ham in July, 1637, and immediately began to direct those proceedings, which laid the foundation of the church. He came here, as his records express it, in expectation of employment in public work. He had received a liberal education in England, but had not been ordained. The history of his life may be collected from his records, which with great minuteness, describe the measures adopted in organising the church, and which unfold his own and the character of his brethren. It required great prudence and skill to gather a church on his principles. He required a strict scrutiny into the actions and religious affections of each candidate before admission, even in those cases where the candidate was a member of another church. This work he however accomplished in a peaceable manner, and governed his church with increasing reputation, thirty-two years. Governor Winthrop says, that this church was gathered with good approbation.* When some disputes arose in the colony, respecting the nature of its relations to the English government, and the affair was referred to the ruling elders for advice, Mr. Allin was chosen the chairman of that body, to deliver their opinion. This he did in writing, and his report is published in Winthrop's journal.† When the synod met at Cambridge, by adjournment, on the 15th day of September, 1648, for the purpose of forming a system of church government, Mr. Allin was appointed to preach to that assembly. He preached from the 15th chapter of Acts. Mr. Savage in a note to Winthrop's text, conjectures that he would insist on the doctrines of the 10th and 11th verses. "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke on the necks of his disciples, which neither our fathers nor we are able to bear? We believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus, we shall be saved even as they." The conjecture is supported by the fact, that these passages well express Mr. Allin's opinions in relation to the government of the church. This is governor Winthrop's account of the sermon. That it was a very godly, learned and particular handling of near all the doctrines concerning that subject, with a clear discovery and refutation of such errors, objections and scruples as had been raised about it.

* Winthrop's Journal, vol. 1, 275.

† Winthrop's Journal, vol. 2, 282.

by some young heads in the country.* In the midst of this sermon there came a snake in among the elders, sitting behind the preacher. Many of them shrunk away from it; but Mr. Thompson, a minister full of the faith, trod on his head and killed it. Thus manifesting the designs of Providence. The snake representing the devil, is crushed by the synod, the representatives of the churches.

Mr. Allin published a book with the title, *A defence of the nine positions*. This book was highly commended by Mr. Cotton, the famous minister of Boston. That he should be employed on such occasions, and be praised by such judges, is evidence that he was a man of no ordinary merit. His own brethren and townsmen seem to have been greatly attached to him. They made him liberal donations, and after his death published two of his last sermons. The history of his life will appear from his church records. He was a man of sweet temper, and as Cotton Mather expresses it, of a genteel spirit, a diligent student, of competent learning, a humble man and sincere christian. Mather proposes his epitaph.

Vir sincerus, amans pacis, patiensque laborum,
Perspicuus, simplex, doctrinae purus amator.†

Dr. Cotton Mather had sufficient room in his *Magnalia*, and he might have collected ample materials for writing Mr. Allin's biography, but the sketch of his life in that book, is a wordy nothing. Mr. Allin died August 26, 1671.

Major Eleazer Lusher—came to Dedham with Mr. Allin, and maintains an eminent rank among the founders of the town. He was the leading man all his lifetime, and directed all the most important affairs of the town. The full and perfect records which he kept, the proper style of his writings, above all the peace and success of the plantation, which had the wisdom to employ him, are good evidences of his merit, and that his education had been superior to all other men in the town, (Mr. Allin excepted.)

He was a deputy to the general court many years, and was an influential and useful member of that body.

When Charles the second was restored to the English throne, great fears began to be entertained in the colony.

* Winthrop, vol. 2, 330.

† *Magnalia*, vol. 1, p. 117.

that its charter and liberties might be violated by the new administration. In 1660, a large committee was appointed by the general court to sit in Boston, to consider the perilous state of affairs then existing, and advise the general court in the measures to be adopted. Major Lusher was one of that committee.*

In 1666, the king's commissioners had excited discontent in New Hampshire and Maine against this colony. The general court appointed major Lusher one of three commissioners, to repair thither to allay the discontent, which duty was executed with success.

In 1662, he was appointed an assistant ; how many years he continued in that office I have not learned.

The following saying was repeated frequently, by the generation which immediately succeeded Mr. Lusher.

“ When Lusher was in office, all things went well,
But how they go since, it shames us to tell.”

His death is noticed in the church records, as it is quoted in Mr. Dexter's century sermon. “ Major Eleazer Lusher, a man sound in the faith, of great holiness and heavenly mindedness, who was of the first foundation of this church, and had been of great use (as in the commonwealth, so in the church,) especially after the death of the reverend pastor thereof, Mr. John Allin, departed this life November 13, 1672.”

His eulogium in the wonder working Providence is, that he was a nimble footed captain, a man of the right stamp, and full for the country.

Captain Daniel Fisher—was admitted into the Dedham church in 1639, the record of which is in these words, “ Daniel Fisher appeared to the church a hopeful christian young man, and was easily and gladly received.” From that time to his death, in November, 1683, he was much employed in public business, in the several offices of deputy to the general court, speaker of that assembly, and assistant, in which office he died. He was employed in much of the business in the plantation. In his time, the notable tyranny of sir Edmund Andros, the governor of the colony, had less plausible pretexts, than those measures which produced the war of separation. In its then

* Hutchinson's history, vol. I. p. 196.

feeble state, it was more insulting to oppress, and it was more dangerous to resist. But danger would not deter a brave man and a patriot like captain Fisher, from doing his duty.

In February, 1681, Randolph, the agent of king James in the colony, exhibited articles of high misdemeanor against a faction, (so called by Randolph,) in the general court, to the lords in council. Among these men thus selected to be the victims of royal indignation, was captain Fisher.

June 14, 1682, Randolph wrote to the earl of Clarendon, that a *quo warranto* had issued against the colony charter, and that a warrant had been sent out to carry Thomas Danforth, Samuel Nowell, Daniel Fisher, and Elisha Cook, to England, to answer for high crimes and misdemeanors, and intimates, that the prosecution which his papers and evidence would support, would make their faction tremble.*

Captain Fisher was speaker of the house at this time, and was, we must believe, a man of great influence therein, otherwise he would not have been so much noticed at the British court. Indeed in such a time, his high spirit and resolute mind, would not permit him to be a timid and wavering man. He lived not to witness the capture of sir Edmund Andros and the other associates of his tyranny, at Fort Hill, in April, 1689, and an end put to their oppressions by that event. But it must be remembered, that he contributed much to cherish that firm spirit of resistance, which produced that change, and which early taught what a brave and united people might do. Many of the descendants of this gentleman have been respectable, and have inherited his high and patriotic spirit. I relate one anecdote, which illustrates the character of this family, and the spirit of the times. It was told me by the honorable Ebenezer Fisher, of this town, late one of the council, a descendant of captain Fisher. When sir Edmund was captured on Fort Hill, by the Bostonians, he surrendered, and went unarmed to Mr. Usher's house, where he remained under guard for some hours. When the news of this event reached Dedham, captain Daniel Fisher, the son of the proscribed patriot then dead, a stout strong man,

* Hutchinson's history, vol. 1, p. 303.

possessing his father's hatred of the tyrant, and his resolute spirit, instantly set out for Boston, and came rushing in with the country people, who were in such a rage and heat as made all tremble again. Nothing would satisfy the country party but binding the governor with cords, and carrying him to a more safe place. Soon was captain Fisher seen among the crowd, leading the pale and trembling sir Edmund by the collar of his coat, from the house of Mr. Usher, back to Fort Hill. History has informed us of this incident, in that revolution, but it has never informed us who took the lead of the country people, and who had the honor of leading the proud representative of a Stuart prince, the oppressor of the colony, through the assembled crowd, and placing him in safe custody at the fort.

The gentleman here noticed, was likewise much employed in the various affairs of the town. Did any enterprise require a hardy and skilful agent, he was the man most likely to be selected. In 1663, he was selected to go with John Fairbanks through the wilderness in search of a tract of good land, which a vague rumour had hinted was about twelve miles from Hadley. He had the honor of being sent ambassador to king Philip, to negotiate a treaty for his lands at Wrentham. Mr. Dexter, in his century sermon, says he was learned in the law.

Captain Timothy Dwight—was a child when his father brought him to Dedham, in 1635. He was admitted into the church in 1652. He was the town recorder, selectman, an agent in much town business during the lives of Lusher and Fisher. He was also after their decease, a deputy to the general court. He was a faithful and upright man, and greatly esteemed for his personal merit, and for his public services. His character is given in the church records, which state "that he was a gentleman truly serious and godly, one of an excellent spirit, peaceable, generous, charitable, and a promoter of the true interests of the church and town." He died, January 31, 1717. Among the posterity of this gentlemen, are now many respectable families in New England. The late Timothy Dwight, formerly the much respected president of the college at New Haven, was one of his descendants. He had six wives, and the last was buried on the same day with himself.

Of the other excellent men of this time, of elder Hunting, of deacon Chickering, of Anthony Fisher, and others, perhaps of equal merit, nothing can now be added. It would be an act of great injustice to the character of the inhabitants, to withhold from them the just praise of willingly and promptly executing all the useful enterprises of the first half century. The merit of suffering, and acting, for the common interest, was that of the whole, and not of a few men. The inhabitants had the wisdom to appoint able and upright public agents, and then support them under circumstances of great difficulty.

Historians and antiquaries in New England have been diligent to collect a full account of what are now considered the follies and errors of the first settlers in Massachusetts. The victims of their intolerance have had their just complaints made known. The several disorders which existed in many of the early plantations, are minutely described. The foolery about women wearing veils, the officious interference of the ruling elders in matters which did not belong to them, and the delusions of witchcraft, have been particularly described, and often published. Many of the least useful men among the magistrates and elders, have made the greatest figure in the early history of the state. This is all well, so far; it is not to be regretted by any means, that we have so full a history of these things. But I am apt to believe that our early history, as it is now before us, does injustice to the whole colony. The spots and blemishes we may admit, are all described by a faithful hand, but the bright and the beautiful parts of the scene, are not fully exhibited to our view. Here for instance, is a little company settled in the woods of Dedham, guided by their good common sense, with tolerant principles in religion, superior to that of the age, peaceable, orderly and industrious. Their principle men of the same character, not ambitious to make a display on a public stage; yet they are not known, they would naturally be overlooked, for crimes and follies constitute a great part of all histories. The success and good character of the Dedham plantation, afford no materials for a good story, while the disorders among the militia at Hingham, the church quarrel at Weymouth, the riots at Mount Woolaston, make those places somewhat famous. That inquisitor, Weld, the minister of Roxbury, as he has been justly styled, who

was so forward to prosecute Mrs. Hutchinson for heresy, is quite an important personage, although he was only a few years in the colony. John Allin, who if we may believe the best judges among his cotemporaries, was a man of great worth, is so little known, that Cotton Mather, his professed biographer, regrets that he scarcely knows any thing about him.

CHAPTER VI.

Annals of the town from 1636, to 1736. Parishes begin to be settled. Vacancy in the ministry eight years. Town indicted for not keeping a grammar school. Inhabitants and proprietors of Dedham become distinct bodies. Sherburne dividend. Three sets of town officers chosen one year. Schools badly supported. Law against new comers. Bills of credit. Disputed elections. School farm. Tyot, or second parish, incorporated. Clapboardtrees, or third parish, incorporated. Census. Review of the last fifty years.

1682. A vote was passed that no one of the inhabitants should remove to a greater distance than two miles from the meeting house, without special license, as any person so removing, would expose himself, in time of danger, and to the want of town government.

Soon after this time, most of the small houses, first built in the village, being decayed, the inhabitants abandoned them, and their small home lots, and settled on larger tracts of land, within the town. In about fifty years from the commencement of these settlements out of the village, it became necessary to establish three new parishes. Tyot, Clapboardtrees, and Springfield, since incorporated into a town, by the name of Dover.

In August, 1685, began a vacancy in the ministry, and continued until November, 1693, during which time, the town was in a low and divided state. During this time the inhabitants elected four candidates into the ministerial office, viz: Mr. Samuel Lee, Mr. Willard, of Boston. Mr. Jonathan Pierpont, and Mr. Nathaniel Clap. Mr. Pierpont's answer, negating his call, strongly insinuates that the state of things here was bad. "When," says he, "God invites laborers into his vineyard, it does not become them to say '*I won't come,*' but will you not permit me to say in this case, *I dare not come.*'"

1691. The town is indicted for not supporting a school. It had been before indicted in 1674. The pressure of the Indian war was then a good excuse, if excuse can be given for neglecting so important an institution. The selectmen report that the lands near Mendon and Wrentham, now Bellingham, are not worth laying out for a dividend.

March 4, 1694. The inhabitants of the town have a town meeting, and adjourn. Then the proprietors of Dedham immediately hold another distinct meeting in the same place. This is the first actual separation of the two bodies which I notice in the records.

1695. The proprietors vote to lay out the lands within the town bounds, on the northerly side of Sherburne road, to the lower falls, which lands are in Sherburne. In 1698, 3400 acres were accordingly laid out, and assigned to those who could then show their rights therein.

March, 1698. Voted to give a bounty of ten shillings addition to the present bounty of twenty shillings, to any person, for each full grown wolf by him killed. A considerable number of bounties, provided for by this vote, are soon received.

1700. Voted to raise thirty pounds to repair the meeting house, half to be paid in WHEAT, at five shillings per bushel, RYE at four, and CORN at two shillings, and a day's work at two shillings.

1701. The great causeway on the bank of Charles river is begun and soon finished.

1702. Voted that the law of the town, forbidding any person, not an inhabitant, to purchase land in the town, and forbidding townsmen to sell to new comers, is in force, and that means be used to get it approved by the general court.

1702. Voted to repair the meeting house, and that short pews be made by the pulpit stairs, where the boys shall be seated.

March 6, 1703. A town meeting is held all day, and do no business but adjourn to March 13. Then the adjourned meeting cannot succeed in doing business, and adjourns to March 17. A set of town officers is then chosen. A new meeting is called on the 27th, when another set of town officers is chosen. On the 17th of April, a third set of town officers is chosen by order of the court of sessions.

1705. Mr. Belcher acknowledges on the town book, that sundry persons, who had promised him at his ordination, to make such addition to his voted salary of sixty pounds, equal to one hundred, had honorably performed their engagement.

November 27, 1711. Forty persons residing in that part of the town now called Needham, ask leave to be set off

into a township, alleging as a reason therefor, that they could not enjoy advantages for schooling and religious instruction, and that being a minor part of the town, they did not enjoy equal rights in other respects. Dedham at first opposed the separation, but at last consented to it, on the condition that the petitioners should be confined to less territory than was demanded. The legislature however granted the full prayer of the petitioners, as to territory, against the limitation of Dedham.

1715. The town granted fifteen pounds for schooling. This sum had been granted several years before this time, and was afterwards voted. This amount in the depreciated currency of this time, must have come far short of an adequate support of schools. Indeed the bad writing, the bad spelling in the records, the disorders in the town meetings, the quarrels in the church, fully denote the want of sufficient education of the people at this time.

1718. The town vote that any inhabitant who shall either leave or sell houses or lands to strangers, without first obtaining leave of the selectmen, or shall entertain them, without leave, shall forfeit twenty shillings for every month the unlicensed stranger shall remain in town. And every person residing here contrary to this provision, shall pay the like sum of twenty shillings.

May, 1719. Bellingham is set off from Dedham.

1720. The province taxes are called *country taxes* in the assessments until this time. The name provincial, might be odious, and on that account not used.

1721. The town being notified that its share of the fifty thousand pounds of bills of credit, was ready to be delivered, vote to accept it, and thereupon make a number of by-laws for regulating the loans to townsmen. I conclude from the frequent attention of the town to this subject, from the number of meetings, and some disputes, it found itself a very badly organised body to become a banking institution.

January, 1722. The small pox is in town, and the inhabitants have public worship in a private house for fear of the contagion.

The inhabitants in the south part of the town pray to be set off into a town, or precinct. Those in the west part present a similar petition. Neither of them are approved by the town at this time.

April, 1723. Five of the principal inhabitants are directed to endeavor to hire a coach to bring the body of the reverend Joseph Belcher, who died at Roxbury, into Dedham, and forty pounds are voted to defray the expenses of his funeral.

1724. Voted to give Jarvis Pike twenty shillings for keeping the boys in order at the pulpit stairs. Walpole is set off from Dedham.

1725. Voted that the grammar school shall be kept half the time near the meeting house, and half the time in other places appointed by the selectmen.

1726. The town voted this year to unite with other towns to form a new county. The same vote was again passed in 1731, and 1734.

1727. March 4. A town meeting is held all day, a town clerk and first selectman only were chosen; adjourned to next day. Then a debate arose about the qualification of voters; two more selectmen were then chosen. The meeting then adjourned to the 7th of March. On the third day of this meeting the town voted to have a new annual meeting on the fourth day of April. On this last day, a new set of town officers are chosen. To this last election there is a formal protest entered on the town books by many of the inhabitants.

September 22, 1728. The town vote that if some inhabitants in Stoughton will unite with those in the south part of the town, in a petition to be made a parish, it will consent thereto.

November, 1730. The second parish is incorporated.

March, 1729. The town vote to raise forty pounds by tax, for the purpose of contributing to the support of an agent in Britain. This measure had become necessary in consequence of the governor's refusal to sign the law for taking a sufficient sum from the province treasury. The vote sufficiently denotes the party which the town supported in the contests with governor Shute and Burnet, in relation to the matters concerned in that agency.

September, 1735. The town authorises a committee to commence a law suit for the recovery of the school farm, in Needham, of three hundred acres, and vote thirty pounds to support the suit. This land had been given to support schools, by the original proprietors of the town. A subsequent generation, having less regard for education, or-

dered the land to be sold to pay the ordinary expenses, and promised the agents indemnity for making the sale.

1736. The Clapboardtrees parish, or third parish, is incorporated.

The number of persons in town taxed this year, is	259
In the first parish, - - - - -	129
“ “ second “ - - - - -	78
“ “ third “ - - - - -	52

During the last fifty years, the inhabitants must have endured great hardships, and enjoyed few of the comforts of life, now within the reach of their posterity. They were continually employed in clearing and subduing their lands, planting orchards, making roads, building fences and houses. In their situation, they derived only a bare subsistence from the fruits of their labor. The remainder went to enrich posterity. They were nearly all husbandmen; they had in the last fifty years extended their settlements six or seven miles from the village, which was now abandoned except by a few farmers. For all these people, amounting to about fifteen hundred souls, there was only one minister, and one school master, employed only a few weeks in one place. The people therefore must have been very imperfectly instructed. There was here in this period, one physician, a few mechanics, no traders, no artists or manufacturers. The strong and steady love of religious and civil liberty, which distinguished their ancestors, had now become a mere blind passion; it had no objects abroad to concentrate and excite its force. It was not elevated by any high motive, for the quarrels with the royal governors, after the charter was vacated, could not much interest the people. There were no such men as Lusher and Fisher to direct and controul popular opinion. The love of liberty therefore began to prey on itself, and there is much evidence that society was then disturbed by rough and uncivil manners, by high, hard and opprobrious epithets frequently bestowed.

The people seem to have had a strong dislike to the introduction of new comers into the town. The reason of it is obvious, they might be expensive, and what was a much greater objection, they might occupy the places wanted for their sons, who might thereby be obliged to emigrate into another wilderness. And possibly they might feel that the descendants of such a pure stock as they could boast of.

would be in some danger of pollution by the free introduction of strangers. Hence the inhabitants remained an unmixed race, little affected by intermarriages or emigration, and unimproved by intercourse with other people. From an inspection of the assessors' books in 1736, I recognize the numerous descendants of some of the first settlers, with an extremely small number of new names. The Colburns, the Gays, the Ellises, the Farringtons, the Fishers, the Guilds, the Metcalfs, the Richards, and the Whitings, descendants of men of these names, had branched out into families from eight to fifteen in number, and did then constitute a considerable portion of the inhabitants.

Some of the little blemishes on the character of this generation, have been noticed. These were occasioned by the shades of the wilderness; it would be great injustice not to state the circumstances which in some degree excuse or palliate them. They yielded to the influence of their peculiarly hard situation. The generations of an hundred years had made great impressions on the wilderness, on the hard and stony ground, and on the swamps and meadows, and these in turn must have made a slight impression on the character of the inhabitants. But let us remember that they had substantial virtues. They were hard workers, frugal, temperate, and essentially upright. They were religious, somewhat too rigid it may be confessed for our taste. Upon the whole, they performed well the part assigned them by Providence. Every new country in its progress to more perfect civilization, presents similar traits of character in its inhabitants, although seldom so good in a moral view. Their rough unpolished manners attract more notice than their useful actions. They were far from being accomplished gentlemen, but in the work of building up a great state from a small colony, they had very efficient and able hands. The men of which we speak, possessed not the reputation of those who achieved our independence, but they did that which was necessary to accomplish that great enterprise. They cleared the country, they laid strong the foundation of civil society. If men like these had not struck many hard blows on the wilderness, their successors could not have given the British armies so many hard knocks in after times. If a frugal father, by hard labor, acquire the sum necessary to build an elegant dwelling house, I protest against the injustice of

attributing all the praise to the son, who does nothing more than direct the workmen. It is by such reflections as these, that we are led to do justice to the men of a hundred years past. Here, before my eyes, while I am now writing, the workmen are raising the pillars to an elegant stone court house for the county of Norfolk. Here again must the above reflection guide us, in determining the proportion of praise that should be awarded to each contributor of that edifice. It is not the magistrate who orders it done, nor the architect who furnishes the plan, nor the workmen who smooth the pillars and place thereon the capitals, who should alone be praised; but the men likewise of the present and past generations, who have completed a more magnificent work, that of changing the wilderness into these cultivated towns around us, of erecting therein so many comfortable and elegant dwelling houses and villas, and bringing to such maturity a prosperous society. So that a court house of a Grecian model, with its doric pillars, is an appropriate ornament. So that this community, with far less efforts than those made by them, can now build elegant dwellings, and erect handsome public buildings, and establish large manufacturing institutions. The men too of that age, were all of the productive class, or nearly so; they transmitted to their posterity the benefit of a good example in industry and economy. There were hardly any paupers in those days, and those that were such, had the excuse of inevitable misfortune, and were frequently relieved by the charitable contribution in the church or in town meetings. There was then no need of a poor house or house of correction, to employ the idle and restrain the vicious.

The first settlers in this town we have seen, required a strict scrutiny into every man's character, who was proposed for admission into the town. When a new comer first appeared, a committee appointed for that purpose, inquired of him his motives for being here; and if the stranger answered, that it was for the purpose of settlement, then these questions were in some form put to him. Who are you, sir? where did you come from? What worldly substance have you? Do you approve our church government? Can you assure us that you will not become a public charge to our plantation? The church was still more critical in its examination of the candidates proposed

for admission. A mere worldly reputation for honesty and sobriety of life, did not satisfy the brethren, but he was required to explain his moral feelings, his religious affections, and his opinions on christian doctrines. Where a stranger would seldom appear, as was the case in all the inland towns, especially at Dedham, this strict inquisition would be made. What was done by the honored fathers of the town, what was done by the reverend elders, agreeably to the policy and maxims of these bodies, would, we may suppose, be done by every man, woman and child in the plantation, because that duty was in fact enjoined by the by-laws and policy of the society.

I have described what actually was done at an early period in the Dedham-plantation, in relation to this subject. We have seen that it continued long to exercise great jealousy of new comers, and in fact to possess great aversion to them. May we not suppose, nay are we not directly informed, that other inland towns of early date were like that of Dedham in this respect? Large commercial towns could not long adhere to this inquisitorial policy, because the constant influx and departure of strangers, the frequent intercourse with the whole country, and the varied pursuits of its inhabitants, some requiring only a temporary residence, would render it impracticable. The old law so long in force, authorizing towns to warn out those persons who had not acquired a legal settlement, grew out of this jealousy of strangers, and in its operation continued to strengthen it. Here we trace the origin of that peculiar trait in the New England character, that of *impertinent curiosity*, so universally observed by our own countrymen and foreigners. It grew out of the attempt to establish a pure church, and a pure commonwealth. What is now impertinent curiosity was in the days of governor Winthrop a necessary inquiry, dictated by policy, and demanded by established opinions of church government. Many emigrants have in every period of its existence gone from Dedham into all lands, few have moved into it. But when the new comers first appear at the present time, the old feeling is excited in the breasts of some of the old standards; what sent the adventurer here!! The current of emigration should carry him into the western wilderness! All the places here are wanted for the natives! If such sentiments are now indulged they will soon entirely

cease to exist. Dedham by its situation possesses many advantages for various employments. The skill and capital which it forcibly draws hither is viewed with delight by every enlightened mind ; and that skilful artist or that man of capital who here, appropriates the one and exerts the other, to increase employment, are real benefactors. And when it is fully perceived, as it must be, that the town derives great advantage from the various kinds of new comers, no unfavorable distinction between native and emigrant will exist.

CHAPTER VII.

An account of events from 1736 to the close of the revolutionary war. Neponset river becomes the east boundary of Dedham. Land bank bills. Revolutionary proceedings. Votes against the Stamp tax. Indemnity for losses by the riots in Boston. Non importation agreements. Vote against the Judges salary. Resolution to resist. Tea drinkers denounced, and posted as enemies to the country. Minute men. May 27, 1776, Independence declared by the town. Preparation for war. Exertions to procure soldiers. First draft of a state constitution approved. Exertions to procure soldiers. Amount of town expenses for the war estimated. Anecdote relating to Mr. Clark the Episcopal minister of Dedham. *Mr. Dexter.* Adoption of the State constitution. A review of this period.

1738. Dedham and Stoughton agreed that Neponset river for the future shall be the boundary line between the two towns.

1740. A debate arose in town meeting, whether the constables should be instructed to receive land bank bills? Voted in the affirmative. Eight men protested against it, and have their objections recorded.

1748. A fourth parish is incorporated, *called Springfield*, now the town of Dover.

October 1765. The town chose a committee of seven to report instructions to be given to their representatives in the general court, respecting the stamp tax. These instructions are addressed to Samuel Dexter esquire, and forbid him to do any thing to encourage the execution of that act, and enjoin on him the duty of resisting the act, for the reasons so fully assigned at that time in public documents and writings. The report further asserts, without any limitation, the right of the town to give instructions binding on the representatives.

October 1766. The general court having proposed to the town the question, whether it will bestow an indemnity on the late sufferers by the riots in Boston, without consent of the town first obtained therefor, the town voted it could not; and it further voted it would not consent even to a partial indemnity.

November 1766. The town acting on this subject a third time, declared that it held in great abhorrence the

destruction of property, by a mob. That the sufferers however have no just claim to indemnity, that it would be a dangerous precedent to grant it as a matter of right, as lately contended for, but nevertheless that we may show our dutiful regard to our most gracious sovereign, and our gratitude to those worthy persons who caused the repeal of the stamp act, we give instructions to vote for the indemnity, as it is now asked for, on the ground of generosity.

1768. The town taking into consideration the critical state of public affairs, voted to chose two delegates to attend a convention in Fanueil hall. Nathaniel Summer, Esq. and Richard Woodward were the delegates chosen.

March, 1770. The great distresses produced by oppressive revenue acts, the coming over of British troops, and the laudable example of many towns, induce the inhabitants to vote that they will encourage the manufactory of such goods as are imported from Great Britain. That they will not have commercial dealings with merchants whose names are posted up in a list among us. "That as the duty on tea furnishes so large a sum towards the maintenance of innumerable multitudes, from the odious commissioner of the customs, down to the dirty informer by him employed, we will use *no foreign tea*, nor permit our families." A committee is appointed to see this vote observed.

January, 1773. Voted that the rights of the colonies and provinces have of late been greatly infringed by the parent country, and that they are threatened with destruction. That affixing salaries to the judges, making them thereby independent of the people, is a measure extremely alarming. Voted that this town will unite with others in measures to preserve their liberties. The copy of these votes are sent to the committee of correspondence at Boston.

January, 1774. The town voted that they hear with infinite pleasure, the determination of other colonies to prevent tea from being made use of, to enlarge British revenue in the colonies. As so many political evils are brought about by an unreasonable liking to tea, and it is so baneful to the human constitution, if any shall continue to use it while the act creating a duty thereon is in force, we shall consider it as a flagrant proof of their hostility to the liberties of the country, and of their own stupidity. It is

further voted that Abner Ellis, the representative, use his influence, that a congress, composed of delegates from all the colonies be convened as soon as may be. A committee of correspondence is chosen.

September, 1774. The town met for the purpose of adopting measures to prevent the late acts of the British parliament from being carried into effect ; and chose four persons to meet a convention of delegates from the several towns in the county of Suffolk. A convention had been holden at Stoughton, on the 16th day of August previous, and had adjourned to meet at Woodward's tavern in Dedham, on the sixth day of September. At that time and place the convention met, composed of new delegates from Dedham and from other towns. This meeting adjourned again to meet at Vose's house in Milton, on the ninth day of September. Here the convention, after choosing Joseph Palmer, Esq. as their moderator, and William Thompson, Esq. their clerk, adopted those resolves, and made those declarations which are published in the first volume of the journals of the old congress, and which seem to have been the first of the kind, honored by an insertion at full length in their journals.

December, 1774. The inhabitants again vote that they will not drink any kind of *India tea*, nor suffer their families, until the country has redress of grievances mentioned in the association agreement. A committee of eleven persons was then chosen to make inquiry, whether any person is so void of love to his country, as to violate these engagements. If any were found the committee was directed to post them up as enemies to their country.

March, 1775. The town further voted that the constables should pay the taxes committed to them for collection, to Henry Gardiner of Stowe, and his receipt should be as good as the receipt of Harrison Gray, late treasurer.

Voted that a detached company of minute men shall be held bound for nine months from the time of their enlistment. At this time they established the amount of wages for officers and soldiers, and voted to borrow money for the purpose of paying the company. The money was borrowed in small sums of the inhabitants.

Thus far opposition had consisted principally in speeches and resolves ; henceforth we shall see how the doings of the town corresponded therewith.

May, 1775. Voted to raise one hundred and twenty men in the parishes, ready to march on an alarm, to be raised by the several militia officers in town. The minute men shall assemble next Thursday on the common, to choose their officers, and for two months to assemble three half days in the week to learn their duty. The privates in the two companies to be paid at the rate of four shillings per day while in actual service. Committees were appointed to procure ammunition and guns, to establish night watches and cause the great gun of king Philip's day "to be swung."

May 27, 1776. In the warrant for the March meeting of this year, an article was inserted in these words. "To know the minds of the town about coming into a state of independency." The subject thus proposed for consideration was postponed at several succeeding meetings, to this time, when the town unanimously voted that if the honorable congress shall declare the colonies independent of Great Britain, the inhabitants will solemnly engage to support it in that measure with their lives and fortunes.

July, 1776. The towns in the state having been required to procure their proportion of troops in two levies. This town voted a bounty of seven pounds in addition to the other wages of the soldiers for enlisting. Seventy men received this bounty. A committee were appointed to provide for the families of the soldiers in distress. Committees of safety and correspondence were chosen this and in all subsequent years of the war. The aggregate amount of services by soldiers of this town during the year must have been equal to fifty-five men, employed twelve months each. At this time the population did not exceed two thousand souls.* The inhabitants were nearly all husbandmen, and had very little property excepting real estate.

* The substance of a census recorded by Samuel Dexter, Esq., in 1765.

Parishes.	No. of houses.	No. of inhabitants.
First parish, - - - - -	105 - - - - -	315
Second parish - - - - -	43 - - - - -	411
Third parish, - - - - -	42 - - - - -	313
Fourth parish, now <i>Dorset</i> , - - - - -	49 - - - - -	352
Total, - - - - -	239 - - - - -	1919

A Table shewing the number of soldiers in the first parish, and partially paid by it, collected from a report made by captain Joseph Guild, and recorded in the parish books.

Years.	No. of men.	Time employed.	Where employed.	Extra pay per man.
1775.	22	8 months.	In various places.	2 pounds 3 shillings.
1776.	14	2 months.	At Roxbury.	12 shillings.
1776.	7	12 months.	In Canada.	24 pounds.
1776.	9	4 months.	At Ticondaroga.	10 pounds.
1776.	3		Marched to New York.	6 pounds.
1776.	3		Marched to New York.	10 pounds.
1776.	7	2 and 4 months.	At Dorchester.	12 shillings.
1776.	5		At Dorchester.	6 shillings.
1776.	2 volunteers.			29 pounds to both.

Fifty-five soldiers from the first parish only, the aggregate of whose services during the year 1776 were equal to twenty-two men employed twelve months each.

February, 1777. The town voted a bounty of twenty-four pounds to each man who would enlist for three years, or during the war. Forty-nine soldiers received this bounty. Having voted bounties to certain classes of soldiers, it became necessary for the town to reward all other men in the public service, according to their respective merit. The town attempted to do this, but met with difficulty in the details. Then each parish assumed the business of paying such soldiers as belonged to it. The parishes raised the money by taxes. In the year 1778, the first parish imposed a tax on its inhabitants for the above purpose, of four thousand four hundred and eighty-five pounds, so that a corporation organised solely for religious purposes, became an efficient body to furnish the means of the war.

1778. The method adopted last year to support the war, was observed this. The first parish alone had thirty-three men employed one month near Boston, seventeen men in other places, and thirty men in the army. The select men, militia officers, and special committees, were authorised and requested to exert themselves to procure soldiers and borrow money. In January, 1778, the town approved the articles of confederation of the colonies. May, 1778. The inhabitants in town meeting, approved of the state constitution proposed by a committee of the provincial congress, by a vote of ninety-eight to thirty-one. This model of a state constitution was rejected by a large majority in the state. The next year the town instructed its representative to vote for a convention, for the purpose of proposing a form of state government to the people.

May, 1779. The town again exerted itself to procure the enlistment of soldiers. A vote passed that the quota of men from each parish, should be in proportion to the taxes paid by each parish. Provisions were then made for borrowing money to pay the soldiers.

1780. The committee which was appointed last year to hire soldiers, reported that they had performed that service, and had paid them twelve thousand pounds. The number employed was sixty-six, and the amount of services equal to twenty-two men, twelve months each. During this and subsequent years of the war, demands were made on the town for a supply of beef for the army. To meet this demand, the town assessed 100,000 pounds on the inhabitants, and 8,000 pounds more for the purchase of fourteen horses for the army. The committee authorised to hire soldiers this year, reported that it could not be done. A small number however, were afterwards hired, and twenty-six men drafted from the companies to complete the number required. Great difficulties arose in collecting the taxes, on account of the fluctuation of the currency. The town ordered a table of depreciation to be made, and that the taxes should be collected in hard money agreeably to it. The credit of the town was so bad, or money so scarce, that the town was obliged to stipulate with their contractor for beef, that it would pay him twenty per cent. in addition to the price of the beef, if it failed to pay at the time agreed on. It likewise voted to make a deduction of two shillings in the pound, to persons who made prompt payment of their taxes.

War taxes.—Bringing into view the taxes assessed by the town and parishes during the war, and the sums borrowed, the annual expenditures may be estimated at eight thousand dollars in our present currency. All estimates however of this kind, are liable to great doubts, on account of the fluctuation in the value of the paper money then current. The nominal amount of the expenditures very imperfectly denotes the weight of the burden. Before the war, the taxes for the support of government, were comparatively small, and seem to have been increased eight or ten times by it. The pecuniary distress of this town at the present time, would not be so great as that in 1780, should its annual taxes be increased to sixty thousand dollars. The

inhabitants were nearly all husbandmen ; they had little money. The sums borrowed being nearly all of them quite small, varying from one to ten pounds, shows clearly the great scarcity of money. That the war had exhausted their means of paying, seems quite manifest, for notwithstanding their strong attachment to the cause which they supported, they at last complained to the general court, that their burdens were so great that unless they could be diminished, many would be under the necessity of removing out of the town.

In the common cause, the people in the town acted and suffered with great unanimity ; and in the same proportion, that they felt indignation against the enemy, did they possess kindness for their own friends. As the strong current of popular feeling ran all one way, there was a smooth surface on the public proceedings of the town. The gravest and most able men, assumed their proper stations in society ; neither the records, nor tradition have transmitted the knowledge of any event which proves the least disorder by reason of debate or contrariety of opinion, except in the following instance.

At the commencement of the revolution, there resided in Dedham, the Rev. William Clark, the episcopal minister of a very small society, composed of individuals in Dedham and Stoughton, living on a salary of fifty pounds, twenty of which was paid to him by the society in England, for propagating religion in foreign parts. Soon was his little flock driven from their humble church, standing on a place about sixty rods south of the new court house, which was afterwards used for a store house for the soldiers. Mr. Clark then repaired to a dwelling house, and there secretly performed the services of his religion. He carefully abstained from all political discussions or affairs. In the spring of 1777, two loyalists in their distresses fleeing from the people who persecuted them, asked of Mr. Clark, information of a place, to which they might flee for an asylum. This request he so far complied with, that he gave to the loyalists a recommendation directed to persons in another county. For this a prosecution was brought against him. The town committee first reported that he and two other persons of his flock, were enemies to their country, and were recorded as such in the town records. Then a considerable number, who sought his condemna-

tion carried him by force, before the revolutionary tribunal at Boston, which had been appointed to try all similar cases. He was denied the privilege of council; he was about to be acquitted however, for he was not convicted of any crime excepting that of giving succour to a fellow man in distress. He was required to swear allegiance to the Commonwealth, which he refused. For this refusal he was condemned to be transported to foreign parts, and was immediately confined in a prison ship in Boston harbour. By means of his hard usage and confinement, he lost his health, and in a great measure the use of his speech. Dr. Ames of Dedham, a decided whig being acquainted with his suffering, interfered in his behalf, and procured his liberty, and a license to go out of the country. He soon went away, and as the only means of support, sought and obtained a pension. Two of Mr. Clark's society were recorded as enemies to the country, but were no further prosecuted. These individuals are known to this generation, and it is impossible to believe that the public safety required any proceedings against them. Mr. Clark, was a peaceable and humble man devoted to his profession; he had no party to support him. The stones directed against the windows of his church, the frequent insults he met abroad, had early admonished him of his danger among the resolute sons of liberty; he was therefore cautious and retired. So it is while a society is agitated with the most magnanimous resolution to defend their liberties, some will ever be so misguided, that they will, under the pretext of supporting their rights, wickedly violate the liberty of others. Mr. Clark was an episcopalian. Did any of his persecutors cherish a vague hope that if the minister was ignominiously driven away, the inheritance of his church, the Colburn estate, might become the inheritance of others? * This I should not dare to affirm. But I may be pardoned for saying it seems to be heresy rather than treason for which he suffered; as one other gentleman whose abilities and influence, made him more dangerous to liberty, escaped prosecution. During the revolution, there were many substantial and influential men here who regulated the measures adopted by the town.

* Did any one ever ask himself the question, has not the immediate successor of Mr. Clark, avenged his wrongs?

When all behaved well, it may be difficult, and it may be unjust to select a few for notice, and neglect others equally meritorious. The Hon. Samuel Dexter, however, deserves to be honourably mentioned among men of the revolutionary age. This gentleman was the son of the former minister of Dedham, of that name, and the father of the late Samuel Dexter, the celebrated advocate and civilian. It was his father's wish that he should become a minister. He had while a youth, a taste for theology, but he acquired a dislike to the profession, principally it is said, by means of the calvinistic doctrines of his father. He was early in life established as a merchant in Boston ; and while yet a young man, had acquired enough property to satisfy a wise man, he therefore abandoned his lucrative employment and retired to Dedham, his native town. From the time of his coming to Dedham, in 1763, to 1775, he seems to have directed and influenced all the public affairs in the town, in the church and parish to which he belonged ; and did more in this important period, to promote the interests of the community, both by his services, his advice and his donations, than any other individual since the days of Lusher, and Fisher. He was many times a deputy to the general court. He sat five years in the provincial congress ; he had the honour to be negatived as a councillor several times by the royal governors. He was appointed a commissioner to settle the affairs of the land bank, and was chosen treasurer of the state ; this office he did not accept. He was one of that council, whose duty it was to assist and support the military operations at or near Boston, in the beginning of the war. On that occasion he maintained that it was impolitic and hazardous to bring a large body of undisciplined troops near to the British army, then in Boston. The majority decided otherwise. This advice exposed him to the imputation of being too timid, and even to the whispers of some that he had grown lukewarm in the cause of his country. But this was unjust, for he did much to support it ; although he was less sanguine and zealous than some others. He retired from all public employments when his constituents were dissatisfied with his advice, and could not afterwards be persuaded, although much solicited, to accept any office. He soon after removed to Mendon, and there spent the remainder of his days in dignified retire-

ment, having a disposition to be far away from the strife of the world.

By his last will he gave five thousand dollars to Harvard University, to promote biblical criticism. Mr. Dexter was at the commencement of his public life somewhat inclined to use severe sarcasm on his opponents, but this trait in his own character he acknowledged, and lamented as an error in his declining years. It may appear that a proud spirit influenced him in retiring from the councils of his country, at a critical period of the revolution. But in this transaction when fully understood, we must insist that he sat a good example. Instead of doing as ordinary men frequently do on such occasions, become querulous, factious, and more eager in their pursuit for office, he quietly retired satisfied with the conscious integrity of his own motives, and left his place for those who have the confidence of the public. His voluntary abandonment of wealth, which he was pretty sure of acquiring, and the good uses he made of what he did possess, and his economy and his liberality, go far to prove that he was a high minded and good man, and a real patriot. His taste for theological studies continued through life. He gave his attention to some questions now much discussed, and determined at one time to publish what he had written on them, but on further reflection, *he resolved to burn the whole, which he did.* It is understood that on several points of theology, he dissented from the majority of divines in New England,* particularly on the doctrine of the trinity.

The revolution imposed on the people the necessity of making a new state government. In ordinary times, this duty would be arduous and attended with much debate. The frequent debates of those times, diffused the knowledge of the fundamental principles of government extensively, and the people acquired great self confidence in their ability to form new constitutions.

May, 1780. The town voted on the question of accepting the constitution of the state, reported by a previous convention. The town gave a unanimous vote of one hundred and thirty-two for the preamble and most of the articles in that instrument. Some articles were objected to, and a committee of fifteen persons were chosen to report amend-

* Monthly Anthology, for July, 1819.

ments of the objectionable parts. They recommended various alterations in the proposed constitution. They would have all *religious denominations* equally protected, and not all religious denominations of *protestant christians* only, as in the constitution. They would have the time during which the judges should hold their office, seven years instead of during good behaviour and life. They recommended an exclusion of clergymen from the house, although they had elected a clergyman, *the reverend Jason Haven*, to attend the convention, which made this constitution. They proposed that the governor's and judges' salary should not be increased for the first five years after their appointment. These and other proposed amendments, were adopted by the town, two persons only voting against them. The constitution asserted the principle, that representatives and rulers are the attorneys and agents of the people. We shall see hereafter what construction was put on this article in the bill of rights, by the subsequent practice of the town.

Looking back on that period, when the ever memorable events of the revolution agitated the community, we may perceive considerable changes in the manners and habits of the people since that time, but these are subjects which belong to more general histories. I have no evidence to support the assertion that this town excelled the inhabitants of any other town by their exertions or sufferings in the common cause. They united, they did well, they caused all the non-consumption and non-importation agreements to be observed; they did all that seems to have been required of them, which was nearly all they could do. Excepting the case of Mr. Clark and his two friends, there was only one other individual who hesitated in the beginning of the war, and he being a respectable gentleman, was at first indulged and afterwards won by kindness into the service of the town.

CHAPTER VIII.

An account of events from 1784 to 1826. Practice of giving instructions to representatives. A specimen. Votes in relation to the insurrection of 1786. Dedham becomes the shire town of Norfolk county. Political parties. Doings in relation to the war of 1812. The people approve the war, and oppose the measures designed to counteract it. State convention of November, 1820. Stability of character. The influence and spirit of husbandmen strongly predominates. Condition of professional men. Changes taking place by the influence of villages. Recent events calculated to diffuse erroneous opinions of the character of the inhabitants. The small number of persons found on the criminal docket. The large number of freeholders proportioned to the whole population. Their comfortable situation. Increasing attention to education, to moral and religious instruction. The beginning of manufactures and trades. Some faults. Increase of paupers. Of intemperate men. Want of sufficient liberality towards men of active and independent minds. The Ames family.

JULY 7, 1784. DOVER district was incorporated, comprehending the fourth, or Springfield parish.

During the revolutionary period, and in several succeeding years, the town frequently voted instructions to their representatives, which were recorded at full length. These instructions were in some instances, minute, and do not afford the least hint that the representative may depart therefrom, on account of his conscientious scruples, produced by a more full investigation. I insert an extract from instructions voted in May, 1786, as they afford a pretty good specimen of this town legislation, and show the opinions of the people in relation to important events of that time.

"To Nathaniel Kingsbury, Esq., recently chosen representative :

"We," says the record, "are apprehensive that many salutary measures of congress are defeated for want of sufficient power to carry them into effect. You are desired therefore to grant such additional powers as may be necessary. You are desired to attempt the reduction of taxes in the following manner. First, by reducing the wages and salaries of public officers. Secondly, by lopping off some unnecessary branches in some departments of government. Thirdly, by abolishing the court of quarter sessions. We are not inattentive to the universal complaints against the practice of lawyers, which many of us

too sensibly feel. If they cannot be effectually regulated, we then desire the order of lawyers to be totally abolished. You are desired to use your utmost efforts to procure a division of the county ;” and here are inserted many reasons to be urged in favor of that measure. “If a project be brought forward to relieve us from our present difficulties, by means of emitting a paper currency, treat it with the most decided abhorrence. Encourage manufactures, and do what you can to prevent the introduction of foreign luxuries.”

Rebellion of 1786.—If the record above recited evinces an inclination to reiterate the complaints of the disaffected at that time, another recorded report, accepted by the town in October following, shows the wise course pursued by the town, in relation to that insurrection. In September, the town received a communication from Boston, promising strenuous exertions to support government. Dedham in reply, promised similar exertions, and thanked Boston for its resolutions. At the same time however, a committee was appointed to report a list of grievances. At a subsequent town meeting, the committee reported, that instead of renewing complaints at this time, it is more useful to explain the causes of many acknowledged evils, and suggest their appropriate remedy. The report protests against all the treasonable and riotous proceedings, then in operation, to overawe the government. It condemns the proposition of renewing complaints, as the rulers are well acquainted therewith, and disposed to remedy them. The scarcity of cash is an acknowledged evil, but the nicest arrangement of the civil list cannot be so effectual a remedy therefor, as private economy, industry and frugality, and above all, the substituting the manufactures and productions of this country, for the fripperies and luxuries of Europe. The town accepted this report, and resolved again to support the constitution. Fisher Ames, Esq. was not one of this committee, but I recognize his style herein, and the sound and useful advice which is given in the report, correspond with his writings on that subject.

March 26, 1793. The county of Norfolk was established, and Dedham became the shire town. This event had been desired by the inhabitants for many years, and had

at several periods since the year 1726, been the subject of town votes and resolves. It was by them foreseen that the local situation of Dedham, would in the formation of a new county, give it a decided recommendation for the shire town ; although several other towns were proposed for that purpose, particularly Medfield, in which case several neighbouring towns in Middlesex county were to be united to this county. If Dedham by becoming the seat of justice, had some burdens imposed on it, the inhabitants cannot with any propriety complain thereof, since for a long time they have advocated the measure, and have derived a great overbalancing advantage therefrom.

Political parties.—When political parties arose in the United States, under the name of *federalists* and *republicans*, a large majority of the inhabitants became attached to the latter party. This majority, generally as three to one, has continued to the present time. The propensity of the inhabitants to support the measures and maxims of the republican party, has at all times been strong, and has been strongly counteracted by the other party. Owing to particular local causes, party spirit has assumed in this town a degree of severity, much above the ordinary character of it in other places. The writings of the late honorable Fisher Ames, a native of Dedham, must be enumerated among the causes of these local excitements. Mr. Ames was an eloquent and ardent man, greatly admired by his friends when alive, and held up as a perfect model after his decease. He instructed his political friends in the modes of party warfare, in a publication in the year 1799. “Our government,” says he, “has not armies, nor a hierarchy, nor an extensive patronage. Instead of these auxiliaries of other governments, let it have the sword of public opinion drawn in its defence, not only drawn but whetted by satire to an edge, to hew its adversaries down. Let jacobin vice be seen as a monster, and let not a mock candour pity, till we embrace it. Other governments may stand, though not very steadily, if public opinion be only neuter. But our government has so little intrinsic energy, that this soul of the republic’s soul must not only approve, but co-operate. The vain, the timid and trimming must be made by examples, to see that scorn smites, and blasts, and withers

like lighting, the knaves that mislead them.”* When these sharp and dangerous weapons were put into the hands of his pupils and disciples, they mutually encouraged each other to use them with zeal and energy upon their opponents. Here where the oracle is first promulgated, let us, said they, show our devotion thereto, by a great example. Unfortunately for Dedham, there were men here who believed they should recommend themselves to higher powers, if they attempted to blast with scorn, the prospects of every man, who dared to act on his own opinion of right. How did the other party, the republican farmers, support their ground? or make reprisals in this party contest? In this town they had no man to put forth in such encounters. They had not even a friend to make known abroad how intensely their political skirmishes were maintained. Our federal foes said they will not even condescend to treat us with dispassionate reason, or mild expostulation, they ridicule our pretensions to the right of self government, by scorn and sarcasm. They endeavour to teach us to laugh at and scorn each other, and thus persuade the many to yield quietly to the dictation of the few. If we cannot beat our opponents at their chosen game, of hard words and satire, we can maintain our superiority of numbers at the polls. In this struggle we need not the assistance of any literary talents or advocate. Go to the polls, and remember that you are opposing the aristocrats. When parties are maintained by such means, they soon acquire the habit of treating each other as irreconcilable enemies, not as honest opponents whom they hope to gain by persuasion and fair means. Here we test the correctness of that doctrine which permits the use of such means as are above stated. From the first rise of parties to 1812, the struggle in this town continued between them without much variation as regards their relative numbers, or the means and modes of attack. What was at first an honest difference of opinion, degenerated into personal dislike and antipathy. Like that of York and Lancaster, like that of Guelf and Ghibeline. The leading partizans could not enjoy good fellowship in each others society, any more than the Hindoo can disregard his cast. If a young man came upon the stage of life, how difficult was his situation.

* Works of Fisher Ames, p. 100.

If he was neutral, he was condemned agreeably to the spirit of the Greek law, for indifference in not having any principles. If he became a federalist, then he was suspected of all their errors. If he united with the party supporting the republican administration, then another considerable portion of the community treated him as one tainted with all the vices of jacobinism. Suppose that this young man by his education, or his talents, gave some promise that he would exercise some influence in society, then while his open and inexperienced mind leads him to suppose that virtue and industry alone will insure him respect, corrupted and veteran partizans in the opposite ranks united to break him down, by whispering in every circle, that the object of their fears was weak, or foolish, or dishonest; or to explain it better in the text of political parties, they endeavored to blast him with scorn. In such a contest, the timid, the selfish, the trimming, the man of two faces, escapes or is elevated, and the honest, the independent, the really honorable man, is the first object of attack, and is most usually trampled down and his wrongs forgotten, and even his friends taught to despise him. If a man like Cowper, or Gibbon, or Milton, should accidentally find himself seated in a society thus agitated, he would flee from it as from a pestilence. The peculiar effect of these party struggles, is fully perceived in another feature of society in this town. In one of the oldest and most respectable towns in the commonwealth, the shire of the county, where there are now eighteen professional gentlemen, where it might be expected that cultivated talents would be sometimes employed in the numerous annual offices within the power of the people to bestow, not any one of the professions, in late years, have been found worthy of public employment. The few trifling exceptions to the above statement, only shows how strong is the policy of exclusion. From past experience, the majority of the inhabitants have insensibly acquired an opinion that the high gifts of writing and speaking, which they have witnessed in one of their own townsmen, is not usually accompanied by a sound judgment and practical wisdom, but will if opportunity be given, be employed to their injury. Thus has genius, by an unfortunate direction of its powers, contributed to take away all opportunities for its proper exercise in the line of public services.

The war in 1812, by adding new causes of excitement, gave to party spirit every where a more severe character. In July, 1812, Dedham voted that every drafted militia man of this town, should receive from its treasury a sum sufficient to make his wages fifteen dollars per month while in actual service. Soldiers for the army were here recruited and drilled. In August, five hundred delegates from the towns in the county assembled at Dedham, and expressed their approbation of the war, and their resolution to support government in prosecuting it. To those who believed the war unnecessary and unjust, these things were peculiarly obnoxious. It is difficult in this calm state of society, although we live so near the time, fully to comprehend the motives and doings of men who were agitated by party feelings at that time.*

July, 1812. A town meeting was convened to act on a communication from Boston, requesting the inhabitants of Dedham to unite in measures to oppose the war. On this occasion, Dedham voted as follows: "As the resolutions of Boston, bearing date the fifteenth day of June last, communicated by their selectmen, requesting our co-operation in the measures therein proposed, without disguise, recommend a general combination to resist the war which

* The following is a pretty good specimen of the manner in which some events were treated by different persons at that time. When general Hull surrendered his army at Detroit, in 1812, some received the news with grief and others with apparent pleasure. Some viewed it as a victory gained over the republicans, so on the other hand, the triumph of our arms was treated not only as a victory over the public enemy, but over the federalists likewise. Soon after Hull's defeat, followed another unfortunate affair at Queenstown, on the Canada frontier. When the news of this last event reached Dedham, it renewed still stronger emotions of party feeling. At the moment when the bad news arrived, a citizen somewhat ardent in his approbation of the war, accidentally entered a tavern in the village, when several of the opposite party came up to him, one of them exclaiming, "Here Mr. democrat, pointing to the news in the paper, see what brave fellows there are in your republican armies!! Not liking such salutations, he retreated quickly, and went into a neighboring store to learn more definitely the extent of the disaster, for different papers gave quite different account of battles. He was no sooner in the store than another neighbor is there, who saluted him with great animation and a brandished paper. How many more such victories as these, says he, must Madison's army gain before all Canada is taken! The afflicted democrat finding that there was a party to exult in all the stores and taverns in the village, slipped away to his boarding house, where he joined a party of girls and young men accidentally there, thinking that he was then certainly safe and protected from further insults. Vain were his hopes however, for no sooner does an elderly female of the family, a staunch opposer of the war, hear the news, but she seized the paper containing it, bolted into the room where the party was, and informed her political adversary that she had a precious morsel for his comfort, and then read aloud, with great apparent satisfaction, the disastrous news, observing as she retired, "Now, sir, I am even with you for reading over to me that insulting account of captain Hull's victory over the *Guerriere*."

is just and necessary. As they contain statements erroneous in point of fact, disgraceful to freemen when viewed as an exhibition of their spirit, incorrect as opinions of public measures, hostile in their design to the national union, and highly disorganising in their tendency. The town therefore reject with indignation, the proposed combination, and resolve to support the government in prosecuting the war." In this resolution, the town continued steadfast. When the Hartford convention was proposed by the general court, one of its representatives, during the debates on that subject, among the few on that side, protested against it as a revolutionary proceeding. When the amendments of the United States constitution, proposed by that assembly, were examined in the Massachusetts legislature, the representatives of Dedham recorded their nays against them.

When a state convention was about to be convened in Boston, November, 1820, some interest was excited in town, in making choice of delegates to that body. The parties however seem not to have had very definite objects for any contest on that subject. When the town was again convened to act on the amendments proposed by the convention, the most prominent articles were strenuously opposed, and rejected by a nearly unanimous vote; the same articles were likewise rejected by a majority of the whole people. The doings of that assembly were so much disapproved, that the inhabitants would not approve of those articles submitted to them which were indifferent or useful, and to which no reasonable objection could be made.

From the first settlement of this town, the inhabitants have exhibited great stability of character. Those opinions and principles which they have at first adopted, they have steadily supported and maintained. In a period of one hundred and ninety years, I do not observe an instance of a minority in any important measure, so far increasing its numbers as to produce a change in the political character of the town. In colonial times, they were ever opposed to royal partizans, of provincial governors they were ever jealous, and when there was an organised opposition to them on that side. In the revolution, they were unwavering and united. They approved the constitution of the state, and of the United States. They have at all times ap-

proved of a republican administration of them. They resisted the rebellion of 1786, and disapproved of the opposition to the administration of the federal government since 1801. To some, this account will be evidence of obstinacy of temper, to others it will be proof of wisdom and stability of character. As there is no common judge to determine whether the people have been obstinately wrong, or wisely steadfast, it ought to be said in their behalf, that what they have opposed, has ultimately been opposed with success by the whole country. What they have supported has been ultimately successful on a large scale, and approved by the whole people.

In this town, almost all the inhabitants until a recent period, have been husbandmen, and owners of the soil, their influence therefore must of course predominate in every thing. The political writings and events of past times, have strongly impressed on the minds of many influential men, that they have separate interests from the rest of the community, which cannot be safely committed to any representatives belonging to other classes of men. Hitherto a most efficient organization of the husbandmen has caused this principle to be strictly regarded.

The candidates for office belonging to other classes of men have been successfully opposed for their supposed errors in opinion, and this has established a custom of confining their suffrages to husbandmen. It has given the force of habit to the principle acted on, and many years must elapse before it will cease to operate. Other towns in the county have been governed at times by the same policy, but not so steadily as Dedham. But a different state of things is about to arise. Not many years will expire before the influence of the villages will be felt, before husbandry will be of much less comparative importance; when manufacturers, traders, professional men and mechanics will exercise their influence, but above all, when new maxims on this point will be adopted by all, because the interest of all will require it. We shall not much longer, it is to be hoped, see that unnatural state of things, when the lawyers and the magistrates will feel themselves obliged to keep aloof from the celebrations and festivities of the people, because they are repelled on all other occasions. A true friend of his country, must wish that the yeomanry who have showed themselves so worthy of possessing pow-

er as those of Dedham, should still possess it, for by what other class of electors can it be so safely exercised? To insure their just share of influence in all public measures, let them seriously inquire whether it is not beneficial to them to depart in some few instances from that rigid exclusion of past times, lest a new combination be hereafter formed to exclude them.

This is the age in which little compact villages begin to arise in all parts of the country, which afford any facilities for manufacturing and mechanical employments. Dedham has two places of this kind, the court house village, and the mills on the banks of Mother Brook. A new population is about to be admitted into the town, which must in time considerably affect its character. In point of interest, they will greatly contribute to the prosperity of it; in moral effect no evil is yet perceived. The means of subsistence are greatly increased, and a wider field is opened for the various talents of men, and we can now perceive the utility of that policy which encourages the manufacturing establishments of this country, by protecting duties.

Professions.—There are in this town four practising physicians, six clergymen, six lawyers, and two gentlemen holding judicial offices. The physicians derive a sufficient income from their practice, to satisfy all the reasonable wants of men in that profession. The clergymen, it may occur to a careless observer, are not all wanted in a town containing twenty-five hundred inhabitants; but it essentially contributes to the peace of this community, that there are three denominations of christians in the principle village. And besides, how could public worship be celebrated agreeably to the wishes of all, without this variety? All the clergymen exercise a highly salutary influence in their respective societies; and their efforts have contributed essentially to the ameliorated condition of our present society, and to the increase of religious affections.

If there ever was one place in Massachusetts distinguished above all others for a combination of circumstances unfavourable to the profession of law, that place was the county of Norfolk, from 1781, to 1826. At all times, and in nearly all places, the people have viewed the first establishment of an attorney, in their immediate neighbour-

hood as a great evil. This aversion to the profession, was felt by the first settlers, and has ever since been cherished by numerous addresses to the people, by votes of towns, by resolves of public meetings, and by the frequent severe criticisms in private conversation. Divines have at some periods added the influence of their stations against it. And last, though not least, may be added the misconduct of some members of the profession itself. It is true in large towns where the more complex affairs of life have required the assistance of lawyers, their usefulness has been felt, and acknowledged, and having consequently merchants, and intelligent friends to uphold them, the deep felt and universal antipathy gradually gave way. But not so in the country in general. In particular it was not so in the county of Norfolk. Since the days of Thomas Morton, the rioter of Merry Mount, the first lawyer established in the county, to the present time, a lawyer has ever been the object of strong dislike. The towns which compose the present county, having until a recent period been a part of Suffolk county, had very little business which required the aid of the profession. Consequently it has happened that in this community of farmers, for a hundred and fifty years, the original dislike to attorneys by profession, has increased and gradually become a distinct trait of character, transmitted from generation to generation, by the influence of habit and hereditary sympathy. And nothing in all that time has occurred to counteract it. The discontents which resulted in Shay's rebellion in 1785, added a mighty force to the sentiment so generally felt before. Many towns like Dedham, exhibited a strong inclination to unite in some scheme to blow up the whole legal fraternity at once. Shay's rebellion soon passed away, and then arose those unhappy dissensions between Federalists and Republicans, which in their consequence were still more adverse to the prospects of lawyers in this county. In the high party times Mr. Ames, the first lawyer established in this town, was a candidate for Congress; and his opponents did not fail to mention that he was a lawyer, and that farmers should have farmer representatives. The community in all subsequent elections, when there was occasion for it, by using the same argument, clearly showed how powerful they considered it. In the phrenzy of the early party times, without much regard to circumstances

or consequences, all the members of the profession joined that party which was the minority in this county, and became zealous partizans, and thus gave their adversaries a fine chance to fix on them the double odium of political heresy and of bad practices. Shall I be pardoned, if I intimate that under such circumstances, the members of the bar, ought to have looked about them, and observed the many evils and disadvantages they had to avoid or encounter. The leading and oldest members, should have called their brethren around them, and addressed them in terms like these. You see how many things combine to degrade our profession, and expose the brethren. Will you unite in a liberal and necessary policy to relieve yourselves and benefit society; have we sufficient magnanimity to retire from those little skirmishes and party conflicts, in which we must be most insignificant actors; and for a time forego the pleasure of a public employment? The celebrity of the Suffolk bar, will for many years to come take from us the management of the few important causes here, the field for the exercise of our professional skill, will therefore be limited to small affairs, and we shall in consequence of it have strong temptations to engage in other pursuits, unfavourable both to the reputation and harmony of our profession. If one member pushes himself forward by soliciting business directly, or by engaging in pursuits, the design and tendency of which is to produce the same effect indirectly, he brings reproach on the whole profession, and destroys our union. If one of the profession becomes a banker, a broker, or a manufacturer, another of the profession may be compelled to do the same thing from necessity. If one engage in many electioneering efforts on one side, those of the opposite party may feel it a duty to make similar efforts on the other. Another consideration should induce us not to engage in other pursuits of life, not allied to our chosen profession. A sound maxim in political economy asserts that the wealth of the state is most promoted, by the greatest practical division of labour, and that every man therefore should, if it be practical, confine his efforts to a single employment. They who have disregarded this maxim, have generally been ultimately unsuccessful. Lawyers in particular who have disregarded this maxim, have at first been distracted with a multiplicity of affairs, then by pecuniary embarrass-

ments, which expose them to peculiar temptations, and lead them insensibly into crooked paths. The profession cannot be a lucrative one in the country, and he who aspires to riches by means of it forgets the spirit of his station. It is honourable poverty united with strict economy, that should content us: since that will secure our real independence, and affords us literary leisure. Let the rich roll by in their carriages! Let others seek the crowded halls of our legislature: we must forego their honours, that we may aspire to others within our reach, and more worthy of our ambition. There is ample room left us for the exercise of a vigorous intellect, not indeed in the ordinary practice of our profession, but in the various departments of literature, in the cultivation of legal science, in the numerous exercises of the mind, which have a tendency to delight or improve society. As our young brethren join us from time to time, fresh from the groves of the academy, animated with generous and youthful ardour, by the best models of human excellence, let us contrive a plan for the exercise and expansion of their rising virtues in real life. Above all things let us frown on that party spirit which seeks with fierce and unrelenting rage to destroy every thing, not congenial to its dark and malignant temper. If we permit the names of Federalists and Republicans to excite unpleasant and uncharitable feelings, within our fraternity, we may wield by our united efforts a degrading influence over the rights of conscience and the freedom of the will, but we shall frighten away every elegant genius, or oppress every generous spirit who cannot flee, and we shall only bring forward the blustering, the mercenary and the cunning man in small things. These considerations so obviously important to the profession in the very beginning of its establishment, have been overlooked or disregarded by some members of the bar in the county of Norfolk, and they all, the innocent and the guilty, have reaped the bitter fruits thereof. The people who have had illiberal prejudices or selfish views against them, have had a plausible excuse, at least in proscribing a class of men, who when the hand of every man was against them, were incapable of union among themselves. There is now prospects of a better state of things. Past errors are seen. One gentleman has set a good example, and has rendered an important service to his brethren, and the community at large.

by his valuable editions of law books, and editorial notes, and his digest of reports. An example so much the more to be valued, as it was discouraged by the prevailing spirit around him.⁷ The income of the six clergymen now settled in this town, I am satisfied considerably exceeds that of the six practising lawyers, and yet the complaints against high fees will continue to be made against them.

Recent events in this town have had a tendency to create an opinion abroad, that here was a litigious and turbulent community. Many controversies in the year 1-18, and in subsequent years, did exist here. In these were disputes in the first parish respecting its funds and rights in pews, and its mode of taxing. The episcopal church had many suits with its late incumbent, who resisted an amicable settlement of his long accounts. The Dedham bank invited a public prosecution against it, by its irregular practices. All these things happening at nearly the same time, produced much excitement here, and must have exhibited our society in an unfavourable light. Now when all these things are past, it is easy to perceive that a few litigious men were the chief authors of all this contention. The inhabitants must indeed bear some share of the blame in yielding to the influence and councils of such men, when they ought to have opposed them. They who were the most active in advising improper measures, and thereby producing contention at home, were likewise the most busy in spreading the tale of scandal abroad, and some of the most peaceable and worthy men here were represented as the worst. The principal authors of the mischief, no longer possess power to do harm, and the inhabitants are permitted to refute the imputations on their characters by peaceable and virtuous lives.

I have examined the criminal docket in this county for twenty years past. I do not find that any person, an inhabitant of Dedham, has during that time been convicted of any crime in the supreme court, court of sessions or court of common pleas. Persons have been convicted of small offences before justices of the peace. There are two cases only recollected of divorces wherein one of the parties resided in the town. The causes of divorce were in this in-

stance, as in almost all the others agitated in this court, brutal habits, produced by intemperance. This is the principal cause of conjugal infelicity wherever it exists in this society. Other kinds of it are hardly named.

A table in the tenth chapter will show in what manner the land is divided among the inhabitants. Nearly all the inhabitants having families, over thirty years of age, are landholders. The number of men having families, who labour on farms which they do not own, probably does not exceed twenty. In consequence of the equal division of the land, its nearness to Boston market, the multiplied means of acquiring property in mechanical employments, in the manufactories, in the transportation of goods in wagons between Boston and Providence, in putting up provisions for the Boston market, the inhabitants are a prosperous community, and well supplied with the comforts, necessities, and in some cases, the luxuries of life.

The words comforts and necessities of life, being relative terms, may not convey that precise information which some may desire. The amount of what is actually possessed and enjoyed may be better known by description and by considering the amount of income of different classes of persons. The houses, with very few exceptions, are sufficiently large, two stories high, clapboarded and most of them painted, the inside plastered and finished. Many have carpets on their floors. A very few families it is believed are destitute of tea, coffee, sugar, flour, and all other articles which the dairies of the country at a distance, or the groceries at home can furnish.

The meat carts, fish carts, and bread carts, at proper times, carry to every man's door the articles which they contain. Clothing, which was formerly a most expensive article is now easily procured. The proceeds of the labour of one female in a cotton manufactory in one week will procure for her family twelve or fourteen yards of cotton cloth; formerly when exerted on the spinning wheel, it would not procure more than one or two yards. The husbandman, by carrying one load of wood to market, with his own team can purchase a barrel of flour with its price. It required many days of hard labour, in former times, to produce that quantity by raising it from our hard and stubborn soil. The value of land is some evidence of the advantages of a husbandman. The price of good

mowing land in this town, varies from fifty to two hundred dollars for an acre. The price of an acre of rocky wood land, unfit for cultivation varies from twelve to twenty dollars after all the trees are cut off. The price denotes the income of land. But the principal source of income is the industry of the inhabitants which is stimulated by every motive and is consequently very general.

A table in the tenth chapter will show what exertions the inhabitants of this town have made at different times to promote the education of their children. In the year 1817, the town was indicted for not keeping a grammar school, according to the provisions of law then in force. The inhabitants were opposed to that part of the law requiring a grammar school, because in their opinion it would withdraw the means of supporting more fully the common district schools. There are now eleven district schools in this town, of unequal size, which are supported such part of the time only, as their portion of the school grant will authorise. Spirited attempts are now making to improve these schools in the mode pointed out by the law of 1826, relating to this subject, with good prospects of success. There are evidently increasing efforts in the town to diffuse the benefits of instruction of all kinds. If heretofore many individuals have viewed the advantages of a good education in no other light than that of conferring a dangerous superiority over their neighbours, such opinions are not now entertained, at least they are not publicly avowed. If the inhabitants have not excelled in the number of those who from among their sons have been educated at college, they have not been deficient in this respect. In the summer of 1825, there were four young gentlemen belonging to the little village of Dedham, in the city of Paris, for the purpose of completing their professional studies, and travelling through several countries of Europe.*

* Mr. Alvan Fisher who has gained considerable celebrity as a painter of landscapes, Dr. John D. Fisher, Dr. Fisher Ames, and Dr. John Richards. Dr. Fisher while visiting those who had the small pox and varioloid diseases at Paris, procured a French artist to execute paintings at the bed side of the patients under his immediate instructions, to illustrate the appearance of these diseases in all their stages. He is now engaged in an attempt to furnish physicians with a copy of the paintings, by publishing a series of engravings, which are afterwards to be painted like the original copies. The most distinguished physicians have recommended the work as one much wanted, and one which must be greatly useful, and one it may be added, which reflects much honor on so young a man as Dr. Fisher.

The young women here impart instruction to the children in the Sunday schools. Considerable sums are given every year to support those societies and institutions which are designed to diffuse the benefits of the christian religion. Surely we may assert one thing of these benevolent societies, without being involved in the much disputed question, whether they will ever effect the object intended. The community which contributes liberally to their support, must have many persons of high excellence and great benevolence. I notice the fact in the church records, that the benevolence of the christian society here was chiefly directed towards charitable objects, until the year 1805. Then in the ministry of Dr. Bates, it began gradually to run in a different channel and a far more copious stream into the treasury of the missionaries. Thus far things good or excellent have been noticed. What is bad and imperfect must be mentioned. And here may be enumerated among other things, a great increase of paupers, and of intemperate men, a want of sufficient liberality towards men of active and independent minds.

During the first century, it is probable that the public expense of supporting the poor was less than that of a single year at the present time. For one hundred and fifty years, no poor house was necessary. Now both a poor house and a house of correction are requisite. The alarming increase of expenses for the support of the poor, within a few years, partly arises it is believed, from an injudicious method of supporting them; a method which rather encourages their idleness and improvidence, than prevents them by suitable employment. When the town shall avail itself of the good examples of neighbouring towns on this subject, and thereby learn how to employ those who will not employ themselves, the present great expenses may be partly avoided.*

If the pay of overseers and other items, not included in the last year's expense, be added, the whole amount will be four times greater than that of 1776. The population

* Expenses of the poor every tenth year, from 1776 to 1826.

Year	Expense of the poor in poor house, none.	Expense out of the poor house, \$
1776.	\$466 05	472 83
1785.	" " " " " "	450 66
1795.	" " " " " "	272 68
1805.	" " " " " "	639 54
1815.	" " " " " "	256 63
1825.	" " " " " "	869 40

has increased about one-fifth since that time. The increase of paupers is attributable to the increase of intemperance. It is not known that in this respect, Dedham is worse than the neighbouring towns; but here, and in all places around us, the evil is great and increasing, and who knows how soon this horrid vice may cause the great mass of the population, to be a corrupted and a debased generation, unworthy and incapable of enjoying civil liberty! The most rigid execution of the laws against intemperance, will not perhaps eradicate it. Yet the town has had much cause to regret the neglect of the proper authority in executing the laws, since in some years the benefit of a strict execution of them has been fully perceived.

Dedham is deficient in the want of sufficient liberality towards men of active and independent minds. This however must be said with great diffidence, for cotemporaries are bad judges of such a point. To assign the causes of this peculiarity of character, would lead to reflections which may not be indulged in this place; but still I am required to say, that the frequent elections to the numerous annual offices, sets in motion a great many men to obtain those offices. Among numerous competitors, that man has the worst chance of success, who has been active, independent, and the proposer of public measures. His rivals can always find some measure or expression or speech of such a man to be wrong, and evidence of his unsuitableness for public employment, whereas a man of an opposite character, who is careful to abstain from speech or action that may offend his party, is not exposed to any difficulties of this kind. The people frequently hear repeated the correct political maxim, that they are the sovereigns and lords of the soil. They are indeed sovereign, and have many favours to bestow, and there are consequently many aspirants for those favours. There is another important truth which they very rarely hear pronounced, that the aspirants for office are pretty much the same sort of men every where, before the majesty of the people, and before his majesty the king, in a republican caucus, and in the court of a prince. That they are more inclined to support the errors of their masters than to oppose them. That they are more inclined to seek promotion by a cautious cunning reserve, than by substantial services and manly freedom.

Of the family of Ames.—Dr. Nathaniel Ames, the elder of that name, the celebrated almanack maker, came to Dedham in the year 1732 from Bridgewater. I observe that he was much employed in town and parish affairs. He published forty almanacks in so many successive years; the first when he was sixteen years of age, which performance, for so young a man, is evidence of an uncommon genius for mathematics. He was a man of acuteness and wit, he possessed a cheerful and amiable temper. Dr. Ames had the reputation with some of being a real conjurer. It is not certain that he disclaimed all skill in astrology, for it is observable that in his almanack for the year 1759, he predicted dire wars and great revolutions, which were to happen in the year 1762, and asserted in the same almanack, that he had grounded his prophecy on the great conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, which was to happen in 1762. Astrologers had for a long time fixed their eyes on that period, as big with new and remarkable events. In his almanack for 1763, he asserted that astrology had a philosophical foundation, although men could never know much of its principles. Is it strange then that he should have cause to complain as he did, that the people required more information of an almanack maker, about future events, than was known by the devil. He was the father of the late Dr. Nathaniel Ames, and the late Hon. Fisher Ames. He died in July, 1764.* His wife, the mother of Dr. Ames and Fisher Ames, survived until the year 1817, and died in the ninety-fifth year of her age. I saw her a few years before her decease, then of a small and erect stature, and affording then evidence of her former high spirit, by her animated motion and prompt replies. She was a descendant of the first Daniel Fisher of this

* The first wife of Dr. Ames died when her first child was born. Soon after the child died also. She was seized of land which descended to her from the family of Fishers. This land having descended to her child, a question arose whether it should *ascend* to the father, as heir at law of his child, contrary to the rule of common law? The supreme court (two judges dissenting) decided that it did ascend. Dr. Ames, although the successful party, expressed his dislike at the conduct of the dissenting judges, one of which was Paul Dudley, the chief justice, by causing the whole court to be painted on the large sign board of his tavern, sitting in great state, in their large wigs, each judge being clearly recognised. An open book was before them, underneath which was written "*province laws.*" The dissenting judges were represented with their backs turned towards the book. The court hearing of the sign, sent the sheriff to bring it before them. Dr. Ames heard the order given, being then in Boston, and by good luck and hard riding, had just time enough to pull down his sign before the sheriff arrived at Dedham.

town, the patriot of that name, and inherited his high spirit which she transmitted to her sons. When I was told that she had supported herself by keeping tavern in the stormy days of the revolution, and that her two sons had been educated at Cambridge, I imagined that there was something of that elevation of mind in her character, which has been so much admired in the Roman matron Cornelia.

Dr. Nathaniel Ames the younger, always resided at Dedham, and began to practice as a physician at an early age. On the first rise of parties in the United States, under the federal constitution, Dr. Ames became much interested in those discussions in which the parties differed. He adhered to the maxims of the republican party with great constancy to his last moments. By doing this, he was doomed to the double danger of being strongly opposed by his opponents, and weakly supported by his friends, which was the case with many professional men in that party. Had his more fortunate brother in this respect been exposed in early life, to struggle long in the ranks of a weak minority, would he not have been broken down by his generous struggles to maintain the right cause in his view of it? We may conjecture this since in the maturity of his fame and judgment, he was not sustained by the popular will in public employment. Dr. Ames was a blunt man, and somewhat eccentric. It would be thought from his manner of expression, that he was more powerfully influenced by his passions, than by a clear conviction of the truth and the goodness of the cause which he supported. He was too sarcastic, his humour led him to use nicknames. We can all now recognize his person, as he appeared in his last days, at the age of eighty years; erect, quick in motion, with nimble steps, with a countenance denoting more the resolution of purpose than mildness of manners, in his conversation abruptly attacking the merchants, by him called *lobster princes*, and his political opponents, by him styled *federalists*, and the lawyers, by him called *pettifoggers*, the ever standing topic of his censure. He did not much flatter the lords of the soil, although he delighted to speak of the husbandmen by that name, and would speak right boldly for their cause.

Honourable Fisher Ames.—The life of this gentleman has been published with a collection of his political essays, in

one volume. It is not necessary, it would be deemed improper to interfere with the subjects of that book. But still it should be said, that Mr. Ames was greatly and justly admired for his eloquence at the bar and in the congress of the United States, for his political writings, for his ardent and able support of measures by him deemed correct and necessary. They who dissented from some of his political opinions, may now without any inconsistency, and should in justice to his memory, concede all this praise. He commenced the practice of law at Dedham, in the latter part of the year 1781. In May, 1788, he was chosen a representative to the state legislature, and in the same year a delegate to the state convention for ratifying the federal constitution. He was chosen a representative to the first congress for Suffolk district, and held his seat eight years. He was chosen a councillor in the administration of governor Sumner, and afterwards president of Harvard college, which office he did not accept. He was fond of agricultural employments, and by his example encouraged his fellow townsmen to enrich and ornament their estates with fruit trees, and with a more perfect cultivation. He died at Dedham, July 4, 1808. It is much to be lamented that difference of opinion relating to public measures, should necessarily have prevented the inhabitants from supporting him in public employments, so long as his health would have permitted it, as his abilities and his experience would in the service of the state, have reflected back a part of his own honor on his constituents. It would have prevented that unhappy precedent in our history, which has contributed to fix that bias of the inhabitants against men of his decided character. Of his political writings, it does not become me to say much; they have been the theme of praise and admiration of one party, and the object of severe and powerful attacks from another. A respectable writer of Mr. Ames' school in politics, has expressed his opinion of them with the appearance at least of impartiality. "The writings of Fisher Ames," says he, "one of the most accomplished orators that the eastern states have produced, had a decided influence. They gave a tone to almost all our newspaper essays for a long time. Mr. Ames had surrendered his mind to a theory, as men of genius are prone to do, pursued it in all its ramifications, till judgment was out of sight. There was a settled sys-

tematic conviction in his mind, of an inevitable intrinsic principle of rapid deterioration in our institutions. This produced a train of melancholy and gloomy forebodings, which couched as they were, in the most animated style, made a lasting impression. Having taken the deepest interest in public affairs, when efforts were made to involve our career in revolutionary France, he watched the crisis with an anxiety almost amounting to mental agony. The feelings that were excited at that time imbued all his ideas, and led him into the great error of blending the systems of the French republic and our confederation together, though no two political systems could be more fundamentally different. With respect to the former, he was always right, sometimes prophetically so, with regard to the latter, almost invariably wrong.”*

The brothers we must here observe, were the antipodes in politics, and the inquisitive may wish to know how two gentlemen of such high metal behaved towards each other, when accident brought them together. If their former friends and neighbours tell me the truth, they had frequently reasons to exclaim in the language of Cassius,

“ Have you not love enough to bear with me,
When that rash humour which my mother gave me
Makes me forgetful.”

In a history of Dedham, the names of these two persons could not be omitted with propriety. In the most active part of their lives, they exercised much influence over their respective friends. In their temper and manner of discussing political subjects, they were deemed models by their pupils. Both possessed a strong propensity to satire, both attacked their opponents with great severity and harshness. Their imitators in this particular having less elevation of motive, and more misanthropy in their hearts, attempted to employ the same severity and harshness to annoy their political adversaries; but in their mouths it was sarcasm without genius or wit, and yet sufficiently tinctured with malice. In plain terms, they used hard words, ridicule and even the disdainful toss of the head, as the legitimate means of party warfare, to do which lord Mansfield has well observed, is the privilege only of vulgar minds. Now they who contributed much by their

* Letters on the Eastern States, by William Tudor, p. 53.

example and influence to lead their fellow townsmen into such habits and manners, enjoy the reputation of being good models, and are represented as worthy of imitation. While the virtuous and peaceable citizen here aiming at nothing but the discharge of his duty in obeying the honest dictates of his heart is hewn down by the edge of that sarcasm of which they sat the first example. In past times this was the case. No unpretending and modest man was seen in any public employment, unless this policy of ridiculing and insulting him was resorted to. They whose feelings were here lacerated and wounded, had no remedy but were obliged to suffer in silence, and have their reputation attacked without an opportunity to defend it. But at last, when the spirit of severe censure from this quarter was directed to a higher object than any Dedham man, and fixed on the late president Adams, then came a rebuke indeed, the review of Mr. Ames' work, by the now president of the United States. Better is it then that some faithful Boswell should carefully notice the sayings and actions of an eminent man, whose life is to be held up as a model, that he may give a faithful account of him to the world, than that a man should be represented as uniformly wise, just and correct in all his deportment. Such a character is not found in the pages of Plutarch, nor in faithful history, nor in real life. Mr. Ames was much admired in his life time. May not the community then reasonably require of his biographer some characteristical anecdotes, some details of manners and actions, that will enable it to judge for itself? That dashing and selfsufficient manner of describing a character in a few sentences, so common in conversation, can never satisfy an impartial and intelligent mind. Besides those who really respect the character of Mr. Ames as every ingenuous person must do, is desirous of seeing those things which elevate him above those numerous debaters exhibited to the public every session of congress. They wish to see him at home, and observe how he demeaned himself to his neighbours, whom in his writings he nicknamed jacobins. They inquire with what temper did he deliver his town meeting speeches? In what social circles did he lay aside the feelings of a partizan and indulge in innocent sports? In what department of science was his mind most employed? In what species of polite literature did his excursive fancy lead

him? If no satisfaction can be given in these inquiries, still let it appear how far he excelled in the humbler duties of promoting the institutions of society. The sketch of Mr. Ames' life, in the first part of his political writings, may be considered a eulogy, rather than a biography, dictated both by motives of private friendship and political reasons, and in that view should be regarded as an unexceptionable composition, not in the least degree affected by the preceding observations. But the same sketch, when viewed as a biography of a distinguished man, may be liable to the above critical remarks.

CHAPTER IX.

Ecclesiastical matters. Extracts from the church records, written by the reverend John Allin, relating to the gathering the Dedham church. Ordination of teacher and elder. Discipline. Ministry of the reverend William Adams. Ministry of the reverend Joseph Belcher. Of the reverend Samuel Dexter. Of the reverend Jason Haven. Events since 1303. History of the churches and ministry in the other parishes.

THE following account is expressed in the language of the records, so far as is consistent with an abridgment of them.

The Dedham church was gathered on the eighth day of the ninth month, 1638. The manner of it was on this wise. In 1636, there were here about thirty families, and about eight unmarried men. In 1637, we agreed to meet at each other's houses the fifth day of each week, in order to discuss such questions as tend to a peaceable civil society, and a spiritual communion in the church society. All the inhabitants were invited to these meetings. The following are some of the questions proposed and settled among us.

May such as in judgment of charity, who look upon one another as christians, assemble and speak and hear and pray and fast together, being out of church order as we are? *Answered in the affirmative.*

What offices of love do christians in our situation, owe each other? Answer—We owe each other all the duties of love enjoined by our religion. To exhort, to admonish privately, to communicate and *inquire after the guilt of persons to mutual edification.*

Are christians bound to join in church communion? Answered affirmatively, because it is necessary to convey us to the ordinances.

What is a church? Answer—A number of visible saints or believers, who agree to live together in spiritual communion, for the sake of enjoying the ordinances.

Who is a fit member for church communion? He who in addition to a good life, makes an open profession of his faith, and gives satisfactory proof of the work of grace in his heart.

Of a church covenant? It is the appointed means to knit this church society together.

No one ought to be admitted into the church until he makes a profession of his faith, and shows the work of grace in himself.

We concluded, that a church thus gathered, had a right to all the institutions of the gospel; likewise the power of the keys whereby she may dispense the same to her members. This power is derived from the church. For the keys were not given to Peter, as an apostle, but unto him as a member of the church, on the confession of his faith.

The ordinances are to be administered, and power exercised, by church officers, elected and ordained in the name of Christ. The officers are pastors, teachers, rulers, deacons and widows. Yet the church may depute some to exercise gifts to edification, when she is not furnished with regular officers.

The teaching officer is to pray, preach and instruct. The pastor only to administer the seals of baptism and the sacraments. The ruling elder to admonish, ex-communicate, absolve and ordain. Deacons to regulate the collections for the poor, and sing psalms. These and many other questions were discussed until 1638, when the inhabitants looked to John Allin, who had been invited into the town with a view to employment in public work, to take the lead in forming a church. Mr. Allin being qualified, by general consent, for admission into the church, he declared Mr. Ralph Wheelock a suitable candidate for admission. These admitted the third person, and these three it was agreed should admit the fourth member, but this mode of proceeding being liable to objections, was abandoned.* Then we two, (Allin and Wheelock,) invited eight persons, in our opinion the most suitable for the church, to unite with us in setting apart a day of solemn fasting and prayer, to prepare ourselves for laying the foundation of the church. They united with us accordingly, and we ten then proceeded thus to choose church members. The company requested Mr. Allin to absent himself from the room, that the remaining nine might elect or

* Dr. Bates, in a sermon delivered February, 1818, which was published, did not notice that part of the record which states that the first method of admitting members was abandoned, his subsequent account therefore of its being done by ten persons, seems to be incorrect.

reject him. So each man in his turn, went from the room that he might be elected or rejected. The result was, six only out of the ten were admitted. Edward Allyne, in regard to some offences given to some of the company in England, was desired to wait until he could explain. Anthony Fisher, by his rash carriage and speeches, savouring of false confidence, gave offence to some, and was put off for further trial. Joseph Kingsbury, although good hopes were entertained of him, yet some in the company were jealous of him, that he was too much addicted to the world. Thomas Morse was thought by the company so dark and unsatisfying, as to the work of grace, although innocent in respect of men, that he should be delayed.

We ten continued to meet at the weekly meetings, sometime longer. Mr. Edward Allyne was admitted. Mr. John Hunting coming unto us that summer, was added unto the church. Joseph Kingsbury remained stiff and unhumbled, but at last when we were desirous to determine his case, the Lord left him unto such a distempered passionate flying out on one of the company, whom the Lord had employed to charge home upon some injustice, that we thought him unfit for the church.

Our number being eight, we had a meeting of all the inhabitants, in which meeting we stated our intentions of forming a church, and the names of those admitted, and desired that if any one knew any good cause why we should not proceed, that he would come forth and declare it. Objections were again made against several persons, but were cleared up to our satisfaction. We then had frequent meetings to form a church covenant. The names of the eight members are John Allin, Ralph Wheelock, Edward Allyne, John Leuson, John Frayre, John Hunting, Eleazer Lusher and Robert Hinsdale.

Having thus prepared the way for entering into church covenant we appointed a day for that purpose. We then sent letters to the magistrates and churches, giving them notice of our intention, and requesting the countenance and encouragement of both magistrates and churches.

By an answer from the governor, we learned that no church should be gathered without the advice of other churches, and consent of the magistrates. *This we conceived might be prejudicial to the liberty of God's people, and some seeds of usurpation upon the liberties of the gospel,*

Whereupon we called on the governor for an explanation. The governor then informed us that there was no intent to abridge our liberties in gathering a church privately, as if it were unlawful, or as if such a church was not a true church, and rightly gathered, but the design of the law was, that if any people of unsound judgment or erroneous way, should privately set up a church, the commonwealth would not so approve them as to communicate the freedom and privileges they did to others. This answer satisfied us!

In the letters we sent to the churches, their presence and spiritual help was requested. We agreed that the day appointed should be spent in solemn prayer and fasting. Mr. Wheelock was to pray, then Mr. Allin; and Mr. Allin by way of exercising gifts, spoke to the assembly. Then each of the eight persons made a public profession of his qualification as to faith and grace. Then Mr. Allin addressed the churches, and desired them to speak plainly and faithfully their opinion of what they saw and heard. The elders of other churches then conferred together; afterwards Mr. Mather, of Dorchester, said they saw nothing that should move us to desist, and gave us some loving exhortations. After this, Mr. Allin dismissed the assembly, and then the elders gave each other the right hand of fellowship in token of loving acceptance of us into communion.

Soon after the church was thus formed, several desired to join us, but considering the Lord Jesus had committed unto us the keys of his kingdom, to open and shut the doors in his name, and knowing of how much importance it is to proceed with caution in our great weakness and inexperience, in founding a pure church, we spent all the winter in inquiring into their qualifications. Several were admitted in the spring.

After nearly two years trial of the gifts and graces of each person in the church, John Allin was selected as the leading church officer. He was chosen into the teaching office, but whether pastor or teacher was to be his title, was not easily determined. On this point the advice of the churches was requested, which answered that it was a matter of indifference. Thereupon John Allin assumed the title of pastor elect.

The next thing in order, was to choose one or more ruling elder. After much inquiry into the characters of several candidates, John Hunting was chosen into that of-

fee. Mr. Wheelock was thought of, before Mr. Hunting came among us. He was disappointed by the choice, but bore his disappointment with christian meekness.

We appointed the twenty-fourth day of the second month, 1639, for the ordination of pastor and elder. The power of election was allowed to be in the church, yet for the act of ordination, some desired to hear that matter discussed. We soon however all agreed that every particular church doth depend immediately on Christ, as the head thereof, from whom the church receives all power of jurisdiction. That as there are no footsteps in the gospel, of the subordinacy of one church to another, the power to ordain is derived solely from the church where the ordination is to be had. Letters from Roxbury, confirmed us in this opinion. The church deputed John Allin, Ralph Wheelock and Edward Allyne, to ordain the ruling elder, and agreed that when ordained, he should join with the two last named, to ordain the pastor. We sent letters to the neighbouring churches, notifying them of our intentions, and desiring their advice. The day being come, we set it apart as a day of fasting and prayer. After prayer by elder Hunting, the intended pastor prayed, and then preached in the forenoon. In the afternoon he preached another sermon. After that, he turned to the congregation and inquired if any one knew of any thing which should make him desist. No objections being made, he then asked the church members to signify their approbation of elder Hunting, by uplifted hands, all hands being uplifted; he then exhorted the elder elect to a faithful performance of his duty.

Mr. Hunting then accepted the office. Mr. Allin requested the church to depute some persons to ordain the elder. Whereupon the church as before agreed, deputed John Allin, Edward Allyne, and Ralph Wheelock. Then the two last came into the seat of the elected officers, and they with John Allin, laid hands on the head of John Hunting, one repeating these words of ordination, "We, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, ordain thee, John Hunting, into the office of ruling elder of this church." Elder Hunting then, agreeable to the duties of his office, propounded John Allin as pastor. There was a general vote for him. Then he accepted the office. Then John Hunting with the two brethren, laid hands on his head, and pro-

nounced the words of ordination, as before stated. Then the elders of other churches, signified their love and approbation of the proceedings, by giving the right hand of fellowship to each officer.

The next Sunday after this ordination, Mr. Allin celebrated the Lord's supper, by calling all the members around a table, where he prayed and exhorted the brethren to make a confession of sins, and when all had taken the elements, he dismissed them.

I have thus somewhat minutely, stated all the material parts of Mr. Allin's record, because he was well acquainted with the principles and discipline of the congregational churches in their origin. He wrote a book on the subject, highly approved by the clergy, and was deemed worthy to instruct that ecclesiastical council which established the Cambridge platform, by being appointed to preach before it.

Mr. Allin's church continued in great harmony all his life time, and afforded good evidence that his efforts to establish a pure church, if not entirely successful, were yet as much so perhaps as human nature will permit. The practice of requiring men and women to make a public profession of their faith and grace, before the whole congregation, was attended with some inconveniences. For not every person who possessed all the christian virtues, had confidence to make a profession in the full congregation. Hence say Mr. Allin's records, "the wife of our brother Hinsdale being timid and not able to speak in public, fainted away in coming into the church. She gave good satisfaction in private, and her relation was made for her in public, she assenting thereto. The wife of Joseph Kingsbury appeared to the church a tender hearted soul, full of fears and temptations, and was admitted in the manner above related.

We see in the following case, to what extent the members of the church supposed they were bound by their church covenant.

1641. Our brother Ferdinando Adams, having a purpose to sail into England, there to remain sometime out of the watch of the church, desired to render his reasons therefor, that none might be offended, or else if his reasons were not weighty, and his course warrantable, he was willing to hear advice about the same. The church after hearing his reasons. consented to his departure.

I see no instance of an admonition or ex-communication from the church during Mr. Allin's ministry. In ten years, there had been admitted into the church fifty males. The number of men assembled in town meeting that year at one time was seventy. The number of those absent, removed, or deceased, may at least be estimated at thirty more, which will show that about one half of the men were then church members.

John Fairbanks did not join the church for many years, on account of his scruples in making a public profession.

Deacons for this church were not chosen until 1650. Deacon Chickering delayed sometime to accept his appointment, on account of his affection and relation to Mr. Phillips in England. The church had for sometime different apprehensions of the nature of the office. These were the causes of delay. Francis Chickering and Nathan Aldis were the first deacons. The Dedham church was the fourteenth organised in the Massachusetts colony. I adopt the arrangement of Mr. Savage. Winthrop's journal, vol. 1, p. 95.

Robert Hinsdale and John Frayre, of the first foundation of the Dedham church, removed to Deerfield. Mr. Wheelock to Medfield. Mr. Timothy Dalton, who was at one time one of the inhabitants, was afterwards teacher of the church at Hampton. Why so many candidates for the ministry came early to Dedham, is not known. Mr. Carter, afterwards minister of Woburn, was here several years. Mr. Henry Phillips lived here, except when he was absent as a candidate in other churches. Did they believe it a better school for the prophets, than the agitated churches of Salem, Boston, Lynn, Watertown, and Weymouth? Dr. Cotton Mather has placed Mr. Allin in that class of ministers who were ordained and settled in England. On what authority he does this, I know not. If he had been ordained in England, would he not as Mr. Wilson of Charlestown, and other ordained ministers, on their second ordination or installation here have done, either protested that the first ordination was not valid, or proclaimed that it was so? Did not his doctrine of ordination exclude him from it in England?

December 3, 1673. The reverend William Adams was ordained over the church. The inhabitants interfered no farther therein than to vote him a salary of an hundred

pounds. I have not seen any church records kept by him. They are lost. Mr. Adams died on the seventeenth day of August, 1685. Not much evidence of the character of this minister, has been transmitted to us, yet on several occasions, I have noticed that his name is mentioned in several ways in the town records, that denote harmony among the people, and great attachment to their pastor. In 1682, Mr. Adams began an elaborate exposition of the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, which he wrote in a blank book, the remaining part of which was afterwards used to record the votes of the first parish. Mr. Adams resided in Dedham in its most depressed and humble situation, excepting several years after his decease. The first houses imperfect at first, had in the course of time grown much worse, and the people in the village were then beginning to disperse into the neighbouring woods. The year before his ordination, the second meeting house was built. This occasioned some difficulty. It had a bell. One year only was the congregation collected by beat of drum. Balch received ten shillings for drumming. Every man who hitched his horse's bridle to the meeting house ladder, forfeited six pence to Robert Onion.

After Mr. Adams' death, a vacancy in the ministry happened, which has been noticed in another place.

In 1693, the reverend Joseph Belcher was ordained over the church and society, both the church and town concurred in this measure, and this concurrence continued to be required in all succeeding ordinations in the town and first parish, until 1818, when by disagreement between the church and society, it was determined that the state constitution had virtually vested in the members of a town or parish a right to ordain a minister over the society, without the concurrence of the church. Mr. Belcher died April, 1723, at Roxbury. I have not seen any of his records. His reputation as a clergyman was high.

The reverend Samuel Dexter was ordained in May, 1724, and continued in the ministry here until his death, in January, 1755. His situation in the commencement of his ministry was unpleasant, and required great abilities and prudence to render it successful. He was here in what may be called the dark age of the town. His people were much scattered in the woods, badly educated, and strongly inclined to religious contention. The formation of new

parishes too, which happened in his time, would naturally create some disputes. A large share of conversation, and great attention by all classes, was at that time directed to subjects of religion. So far his relation to his people would be more pleasant, and would perhaps in the opinion of a pious clergyman, contribute much to his happiness. But then, when there is more zeal than knowledge, when the most active and restless minds in the society, find no other subjects for discussion but theology, and no occasion for public meetings but those of the church, for the purpose of discipline, then does the situation of the minister become perilous. This was Mr. Dexter's case. Very soon after his ordination, church meetings became frequent for the purpose of correcting disorderly members. These resulted in an ecclesiastical council, in July, 1725. The council after a long investigation, came to the determination that the brethren complained of, had wronged the church "*by hard, high and unjust reflections,*" and had taken advantage of the perplexed state of the church; and for this offence should make a humble acknowledgment, and request to be restored on that condition. This was complied with by the offenders, and by the church. This council afforded matter for a new offence, and consequently for further admonition. Certain other members were supposed to be guilty of giving false testimony before the council, and consequently deserving admonition. It was a disputed fact, whether the accused members were guilty of falsehood or not. After much discussion, the church found itself a very illy organised body to arraign, try and convict a member of this crime, when there was contradictory evidence as to the fact, and the matter subsided after much discussion.

In 1735, the church suspended a female from the church for the offence of evil speaking, reviling, and reproachful language. She believed herself much wronged, and requested the church to unite with her in a mutual council, which was refused. An ex-parte council however was convened at her house, and published their result as follows: "In the case of Sarah Gay, we do charitably hope and suppose, that the first church in Dedham think they have just cause for censuring and admonishing her, but nevertheless it has been a time of great temptation in the place, when many persons are misled. We do hope, upon further con-

sideration, they will soften their proceedings towards her, wherefore we advise her to renew her application for admission to gospel ordinances, and humbly hope they will receive her, and overlook all that is passed, exercising mutual forgiveness, without requiring a full confession." She renewed her request and was refused. I perceive other complaints against other brethren. The neighbouring towns were, it appears, in a similar situation, and Mr. Dexter was invited to attend at Milton, and at Braintree, to assist in councils in those places, convened for the purposes of healing difficulties. From these and numerous other evidences of church meetings, and ecclesiastical councils, in this and other towns about this period, we have good ground for the conjecture, that the litigious propensities of the community, which now find more congenial objects in the various pursuits of men, were then directed solely to church discipline. And we may suppose too, that the clergy and the friends of good order, soon learned what the history of the christian church fully teaches, that ecclesiastical councils, and synods, and church meetings, to prevent dissensions, are more likely to contribute to these evils, than affect their remedy. With these dissensions, Mr. Dexter was painfully affected, but the latter part of his ministry was calm and quiet. He was greatly respected by all, was deemed a very able man to advise other churches in difficulty, and was much employed in that way.

In his ministry, 1742, the mode of admitting members into the church was so far changed, that the candidate for admission might at his own discretion, make a public profession, or a more private one before the minister.

The New England psalms were used in the church until 1751, when they were exchanged for Tate and Brady, bound in a volume with a collection of Dr. Watt's psalms and hymns. A record of Mr. Dexter's, denotes that until the commencement of his ministry, the deacons read the psalm and tuned it. October 24, 1724. Voted that Mr. Jabez Pond shall for the future read the psalm, and tune it, deacon Wight not being able. Mr. Dexter preached a century sermon, in 1738. If the second century of this town be commemorated, should it not be on the first of September, 1835, for two hundred years before that time, the settlement began. The records of the town began

September, 1635. Mr. Dexter died January 29, 1755. He was the father of the Hon. Samuel Dexter, before noticed.

February 6, 1756. The reverend Jason Haven, of Framingham, was ordained as the successor of Mr. Dexter, and continued in the ministry until May, 1803. He lived here at a time more propitious to the peace of the church. Political discussions and revolutionary events strongly attracted the minds of men. The church meetings of his days were convened principally to give instructions for the management of the church lands, which were so well and so steadily improved all his time, that the ample funds of the first parish at the present time afford alone a good living. In gratitude it should be remembered, that the fathers of the church, under their pressing necessities for a long number of years, suffered these funds to accumulate. To the influence of Mr. Haven, supported by his deacons and the church, does this praise belong. Mr. Haven was hearty in the revolutionary cause. He was a delegate to the convention which formed the state constitution.

Revolutionary times having produced a disposition to investigate all the former principles and opinions of men, in politics and church government, Mr. Haven caused the mode of admission into the church to be altered. This was done in 1793. The new method required the candidate to be propounded to the congregation by the minister. If no objections within fourteen days were made, he was then of course admitted. At the same time the church covenant and creed was altered, and made very general in its expressions. This creed had so few articles, that all persons professing and calling themselves christians, would assent to it without any objection. The church had ever in this place required of its members guilty of unlawful cohabitation before marriage, a public confession of that crime, before the whole congregation. The offending female stood in the broad isle beside the partner of her guilt. If they had been married, the declaration of the man was silently assented to by the woman. This had always been a delicate and difficult subject for church discipline. The public confession, if it operated as a corrective, likewise produced merriment with the profane. I have seen no instance of a public confession for this fault, until the ministry of Mr. Dexter, and then they were extremely rare. In 1781, the

church gave the confessing parties the privilege of making a private confession to the church, in the room of a public confession. In Mr. Haven's ministry, the number of cases of unlawful cohabitation, increased to an alarming degree. For twenty-five years before 1781, twenty-five cases had been publicly acknowledged before the congregation, and fourteen cases within the last ten years. This brought out the minister to preach on the subject from the pulpit. Mr. Haven, in a long and memorable discourse, sought out the cause of the growing sin, and suggested the proper remedy. He attributed the frequent recurrence of the fault to the custom then prevalent, of females admitting young men to their beds, who sought their company with intentions of marriage. And he exhorted all to abandon that custom, and no longer expose themselves to temptations which so many were found unable to resist.

The immediate effect of this discourse on the congregation, has been described to me, and was such as we must naturally suppose it would be. A grave man, the beloved and revered pastor of the congregation, comes out suddenly on his audience, and discusses a subject on which mirth and merriment only had been heard, and denounces a favorite custom. The females blushed, and hung down their heads. The men too hung down their heads, and now and then looked out from under their fallen eye brows, to observe how others supported the attack. If the outward appearance of the assembly was somewhat composed, there was a violent internal agitation in many minds. And now, when forty-five years have expired, the persons who were present at the delivery of that sermon, express its effect by saying, "How queerly I felt!" "What a time it was!" "This was close preaching indeed!" The custom was abandoned. The sexes learned to cultivate the proper degree of delicacy in their intercourse, and instances of unlawful cohabitation in this town since that time have been extremely rare. What sermon or eloquent address can be pointed out, that has produced such decidedly good effects.

Mr. Haven frequently assisted at ordinations. In 1761, he preached the artillery election sermon. In 1766, he preached the general election sermon. In 1789, he preached the Dudleian lecture, and in 1791, he preached the convention sermon. He died May 17, 1803, in the seventy-first year of his age. Dr. Prentiss of Medfield, in a funeral discourse, gave him a high character, which

comes nearly up to Cowper's model of a good preacher, and has expressed him, "simple, grave, sincere, in doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain, and plain in manner."

The circumstance that the first five clergymen have been highly praised, without any notice of any fault or defect in the character of any one of them, may excite suspicion that there has not been sufficient discrimination between that eulogy which flows from friendship and a love of display, and that just commendation which rests on real merit. If there be error in this respect, it cannot now be discovered.

The reverend Joshua Bates was ordained a colleague with Mr. Haven, March 16, 1803, and was dismissed from the ministry over the parish at his own request, February, 20, 1818. The cause of this request was his appointment to the presidency of Middlebury college. The situation of the religious society during his ministry here, was similar to that of many others in New England at that time, and well deserves to be calmly reviewed, when facts are remembered without the excitement which they produced. From the time when Mr. Jefferson first became a candidate for the presidency, to the time of his retiring from it, it was frequently objected against him that he was a disbeliever of the christian doctrines. Notwithstanding this objection, a large portion of this parish supported his administration. The objection was so frequently and so earnestly reiterated, that this circumstance produced a conviction in the minds of many men, that political reasons, and not fear of danger to the interest of religion, were the real motives of this attack on the president. A respectable minority in the parish, on the other hand, who saw their neighbours apparently uninfluenced by so serious a charge, concluded that they had already come under the influence of wickedness in high places, and had acquired a strong propensity to infidelity. The minister of a flock thus divided, would be in a critical situation, even had he determined to observe the strictest neutrality between the parties. But Dr. Bates deemed it his duty to proclaim aloud his fears and apprehensions from the influence of infidelity. He clearly discovered, in conversation and in his pulpit, that the writings of one party had made a great impression on his mind. It was the fashion in those days to impute difference of opinion to improper motives, and even Dr. Bates

could not conceal his opinion, that he thought many of his hearers, at best, but doubtful christians. His frequent and explicit definition of a true christian, when applied by his hearers to themselves, so clearly excluded them, that a large portion of the society saw that their religious instructor viewed them in no other light than that of unworthy pretenders to the christian name. Notwithstanding the abilities, the prudence, the unexceptionable life and undoubted piety of Dr. Bates, sustained him in the ministry, and peace was maintained, not that peace which flows from harmony of sentiments and compatibility of religious sympathies, but that which arises from political expedience. In addition to this cause of disunion was another still more powerful ; these times were pronounced the age of infidelity. Yet Dr. Bates did so explain and enforce some of the christian doctrines, that they always have excited doubts and controversy, and probably always will. This produced unfriendly criticism, which in turn exposed those who doubted, to the renewed charge of heresy and irreligious propensities.

Thus we can now perceive, in a calmer moment, that there was indeed in this period great danger of irreligion from great temptations, not from the solitary example of a single ruler being an infidel ; a case after all, that was never proved, but from other causes. The great danger arose not from the writings of infidels, for very rarely were any books of that kind read in this town. But it arose from an injudicious attempt to stigmatize a popular and revered chief magistrate of the United States with the odious name of unbeliever, without sufficient evidence for such a charge. Secondly, from the frequent asserting in an age of free inquiry, some of the most difficult doctrines of the christian religion, without sufficient care ; doctrines which have ever excited controversy. Thirdly, from the dangerous experiment of endeavouring to inlist the sincere attachments of christians to their own opinions and customs, in the cause of contending political parties. It cannot be denied that these combined causes, produced their natural effects, and held out to the rising generation many strong temptations, to doubt, to dispute, and even to condemn what all should be invited by gentle means to respect. Dr. Bates, a gentleman every way worthy of confidence and respect by this operation of things, lost

much of his influence, and when he asked for a dismissal, a majority heard of it with pleasure, and willingly voted for his dismissal in the belief that a successor might be ordained who would be more useful, because his opinions would be more compatible with their own.

Under these circumstances, the Rev. Alvan Lamson became a candidate for the ministry. After the usual delay he was on the thirty-first day of August 1818, elected by the parish a successor to Dr. Bates, by a majority of eighty-one to forty-four. The church refused to concur in this election by a majority of seventeen to fifteen.* The parish having received Mr. Lamson's acceptance without the concurrence of the church, caused a council to be convened on the twenty-eighth day of October following, for the purpose of ordaining him. A council composed of the pastors and delegates of thirteen churches, met on that day at Dedham. At that time judge Haven appeared before the council and read a protest against any further proceeding. The protest was a lengthy document explaining the usage of the churches, and showing wherein the proposed ordination would be a departure from it. The council on the first day examined evidences in relation to the charges in the protest. The second day it published its result, which was a determination to proceed in the ordination. The result in explanation of the views of the council, asserts that it considered the ancient usage as wise and beneficial, but a different state of society, and different laws may be a sufficient reason for departing from it in some cases, particularly when it is believed that a strict adherence to it will tend to create or increase divisions. The spirit and end of the usage, rather than the letter of it, is to be consulted. The constitution secures to every religious society, the right of choosing its own religious teacher, and the laws enjoin the duty of doing so. The council believe that each body, the parish and the

* Although the vote of the church on the question of choosing Mr. Lamson is correctly stated above, yet it should be further stated that the church connected with the parish, have always maintained that they had a majority of all the church members including those who voted, and those who did not vote on account of their relation with other churches not having been regularly transferred; this fact was not and could not be a point in the lawsuit. It should be further stated that although the first parish church is in a legal sense the first church, and may be so called in this account, yet that portion which constituted the majority on the thirty-first day of August 1818, and which afterwards left the first parish have ever claimed to be the first church in all ecclesiastical proceedings, and is so styled by its friends.

church have a right to choose a religious teacher. This right is secured to the parish by the principles of congregational polity, and the state constitution, and when it decides for itself that it is expedient to proceed, without the concurrence of the church, the council ought not to deny their request. On the twenty-ninth day of October, Mr. Lamson was ordained over the first parish.

The majority of the church, including the two deacons, and a minority of the parish, who were dissatisfied with these proceedings, caused another council to be convened at Dedham on the 18th day of November succeeding, composed of the pastors and delegates of sixteen neighbouring churches, for the purpose of advising the persons who requested it. This council sat two days, reviewed all the proceedings in Mr. Lamson's ordination, and communicated the result of their deliberation, a part of which is in these words. "In the settlement of a minister in the first church and parish, the council discover in the measures pursued, the want of such a spirit of condescension, as seems best adapted to produce and preserve unity and peace. It appears that the parish in opposition to the wishes of the church, have proceeded to settle a public teacher of religion and morality, not in accordance with the accustomed and pacific proceedings of congregational churches in New-England, nor in the judgment of this council, was this one of those cases of necessity, which in the opinion of some would justify such a procedure." The council gave no definite advice to those who requested it.

The church united to the parish on the 15th day of November 1818, elected Mr. Lamson their pastor. Deacon Fales did not attend Mr. Lamson's meeting after his ordination. November 13, 1818, deacon Swan died. March 15, 1819, deacon Jonathan Richards resigned his office, and on the same day the vacant offices were filled by the election of deacon Eliphalet Baker and deacon Luther Richards. That portion of the church which seceded, claimed to be the first church, and in that capacity claimed the ample funds which had been long accumulating. In consequence of this claim a law suit of great interest and importance arose, in which the first Parish, and the church connected with it, were one party, and the seceding members the other, although the nominal parties in court were the deacons of the two churches after their division. The

principal questions involved in this suit were argued at Dedham, October, 1820, by eminent council, and the opinion of the court delivered in March following, at Boston, by the Chief Justice.*

The opinion of the court is fortified by a long and full argument, and decides the principal question agitated in the case, that where the majority of a congregational church, separate from the majority of the parish, the members who remain, although a minority, constitute the church in such parish, and retain the rights and property belonging thereto. The court in one word supported the council which ordained Mr. Lamson, on the ground it assumed, and stated at much length the usage of congregational churches, its variations from time to time, by alterations of the laws, and finally by the constitution of the State, and the principles of religious liberty. The deacons of the first church (for that was the title which the Supreme Court gave to that portion which united with the parish,) assumed the same controul over the funds that was exercised by former deacons. Both parties in the suit agreed that the funds belonged to the first church, and the principal question was, which party constituted the first church? Considerable asperity of feeling was excited by these proceedings, but we live so near the time in which they happened, that it is improper to inquire who contributed most to such an effect, and it is not consistent with my design, which is to give a simple narration of facts, without any comment thereon. Justice, however, requires the statement of this fact, that before Mr. Lamson had been invited into the parish, it was really divided by religious opinion and strong aversions, arising from numerous other causes, and that after he became a candidate for the ministry, his opposers did not urge any objections against his moral or professional qualifications. The opposition to him therefore arose from diversity of sentiments.

I have collected this concise account from the pamphlet containing a statement of the proceedings of the first council : judge Haven's pamphlet giving a minute detail of some events, in connection with the ordination ; particularly of the doings of the second council ; and from the report of the lawsuit to which the reader may be

* 16 Mass. Reports, 488.

referred to, if he desires a more full statement. It has generally been supposed that the real and principal cause of this controversy, was a difference of opinion on some points of theology, much disputed at the present day ; particularly the doctrine of the trinity. In this view of it, the christian community at large has taken no ordinary interest in its origin and progress. The circumstance that each party here was supposed to be connected with a greater party, extending throughout the country, had a strong tendency to strengthen the spirit of religious faction. But it is my pleasing task to record a quite different result. They who a few years ago strenuously opposed each other, are now good and kind neighbours, and think not of any other triumph, excepting that which flows from proving the soundness of their faith by the innocence of their lives. By what cause it may be inquired, has an effect so unusual in religious controversy been produced ? It is the influence of American principles respecting the rights of conscience, which are embodied in the constitution and approved by society, which has prevented the evils, which otherwise may have arisen. There are many powerful propensities in the human heart to intolerance, but the reasons, on which religious liberty is founded, are constantly supplying society with an antidote for that evil, still more powerful and steady in its operation.

If in an evil hour, the two parties, which now contend with commendable moderation for their doctrines, should in their zeal forget the spirit they are of, let them hear a christian father and philosopher, who described the effects of the Arian and Trinitarian controversy in the fourth century. It is a thing, says *Hilary*, equally deplorable and dangerous, that there are as many creeds as opinions among men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy, as there are faults among us, because we make creeds arbitrarily, and explain them as arbitrarily. The Homousion is rejected and received and explained away by successive synods. The partial or total resemblance of the Father and of the Son is a subject of dispute for these unhappy times. Every year, nay every moon, we make new creeds to describe invisible mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent. We anathematize those whom we

defended. We condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others, and reciprocally tearing one another to pieces. We have been the cause of each others ruin.”*

The second parish was incorporated in November, 1730, including at that time, the inhabitants in the west part of the town, who were in January, 1736, incorporated into another society, called the third parish. The land in these parishes is certainly as good as that in the first parish, and some of it much better. Why, it may be inquired, was a hundred years suffered to elapse, before this part of the town was fully settled? Why did those who removed from the village prefer to go to a greater distance, even to Deerfield, rather than settle on good land nearer home? The cause of this is discovered in the policy of the inhabitants, which compelled them at that time, to live in a compact village, and in the spirit of the times, which led the most enterprising to seek large quantities of land in the wilderness, which trait of character, Roger Williams called a depraved appetite, *and the god of New England*. The inhabitants of these two parishes, intending to form one religious society, erected a house for public worship, in a place best calculated to accommodate them. But after meeting in it for sometime, it was abandoned, for the local situation of the two parishes did not conveniently admit of their union. In June, 1736, the reverend Thomas Balch was ordained in the second parish. He died in the thirty-eighth year of his ministry. His successor in office was the reverend Jabez Chickering, who was ordained July, 1776, and continued therein until his death, in March, 1812. The successful labours of these two ministers, in a period of seventy-five years, were productive of peace. No quarrel or discord is known to have existed, worthy of notice. A more unequivocal evidence of their merit, and of the religious and good moral habits of their people cannot be given. Both of these gentlemen were respected by their people and professional brethren. The present minister of that parish, the reverend William Cogswell, was ordained April 26, 1815. In June, 1816, he published a sermon in which he stated minutely the history of his church, which renders it superfluous and improper for me

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. 3 vol. 4.

to state more particularly than I have done, its past and present condition. The continued peace and prosperity of this society is a fact which will excite in the mind of every man in it, a desire to be still distinguished, as their fathers have been, by their exemption from church quarrels.

The third parish was not harmonious in its origin. Those who were discontented with Mr. Dexter, were settled in that part of the town. Some considerable difficulty existed in the separation. The reverend Josiah Dwight of Woodstock, a descendant of the family of that name in this town, was the first clergyman settled in that parish. He was ordained June, 1735, and was dismissed on account of dissensions between him and the parish, in November, 1742. In November, 1743, the reverend Andrew Tyler was ordained as his successor. Mr. Thatcher said in a public discourse, that this gentleman was well spoken of by all parties, as one possessed of respectable professional gifts, as very amiable and polite in his manners, and much respected by his people for the first twenty years of his ministry. From 1764 to 1772, to the time of his dismission, great and severe disputes existed between him and the parish. Repeated but fruitless attempts were made during this time, by parish meetings, church meetings, and ecclesiastical councils, to restore peace.

Finally, in 1772, the parish determined to withhold his salary, and inserted their reasons therefor in the parish records. This record discloses pretty fully the temper of the parties, and is a good precedent to show what may be expected from the attempt of a settled minister to remain in his parish after the majority desire his dismission. The record proceeds thus: "The laws of the province require that a minister should be learned, orthodox, able, pious, and of good conversation, but your committee is humbly of the opinion that the minister of this parish is very deficient in some of these qualifications. As to his learning, the committee, not being judges in that matter, can only say that some men of learning have given intimations that he was reckoned at college a very indifferent scholar, and ministers in general are looked upon to be much his superiors in that respect. As to his orthodoxy, the parish have never made any complaint, nor do the committee. As to his ability, which we take not to imply the same thing as learning, but is understood by us to mean the same thing

as an able minister of the new testament, that is, one apt to teach, who always feeds his flock, one able to convince gain-sayers, who can comfort as well as reprove, one who can govern his own temper and bear with the infirmities of others. In all these particulars, we consider Mr. Tyler deficient. But what is most exceptionable, Mr. Tyler does not appear to be a man of piety and good conversation. He is frequently guilty of rash and unguarded expressions, of a disregard to truth. He has handled the word of God deceitfully, in order to level his artillery against those with whom he has been offended. He has been noisy, boisterous and turbulent. In administering the discipline of the church, he has been partial through prejudice." When the whole parish had thus indicted their minister, guilty or innocent, we must suppose he would gladly retire from it. But this charge seems to have much support, from the circumstance that Mr. Tyler remained so long, until the parish was wrought up into the state of feeling, indicated by the charges. Yet we must recollect that we hear not Mr. Tyler's defence, if he had any.

In December, 1772, seven referees mutually chosen, determined on what condition Mr. Tyler should be dismissed. These conditions were complied with by both parties. Mr. Tyler after his dismissal, retired to Boston with his family.

June 7, 1780. The reverend Thomas Thatcher was ordained over the parish. In the settlement and salary granted him, a provision was made for avoiding "*the awful and deplorable consequences*" of former disputes with their minister. Mr. Thatcher continued their minister until his death, in October, 1812. Mr. Thatcher maintained a high reputation for abilities. He was invited to preach many occasional sermons, twenty of which were published. He was a member of the American academy of arts and sciences. In 1788, he was chosen a delegate with the Hon. Fisher Ames for this town, to the convention for ratifying the federal constitution, and made a speech in favour of its ratification. His connexion with his church was upon the whole beneficial and happy, although he gently hinted at his afflictions, and the severe criticisms on his manners. If a minister is frugal, then says he, they tax him with avarice ; if he is public spirited, then they call him a prodigal. In these afflictions of the gospel, blessed be God, I can

boast no uncommon share ! He had strong feelings, and they would burst out on many occasions, without much controul. He had oddities and peculiarity of manners. He was never married ; the members of his society have said “ what a pity it is our parson has no wife to check his excentric sallies, and soften his blunt manners.” It is honorable to the parish, that they duly appreciated the solid worth of Mr. Thatcher, and overlooked his little foibles, and this further proves that the people there were not inclined to contention. Mr. Thatcher’s ancestors, for four generations before him, were respectable and useful men. His father was the late Oxenbridge Thatcher, Esq., of Boston, a respectable lawyer and political writer. Dr. Peter Thatcher, of Boston, was his brother.

The reverend John White was ordained over this parish in April, 1814, and uninterrupted harmony has existed therein ever since.

Some disputes arose in the third parish, in the year 1808, respecting the location of a new meeting house, but disputes about the repairs and building of meeting houses, are almost a matter of course, every where. It would require much time to describe the contentions on that subject in this town, particularly in the first parish. I have noticed eight different votes passed in the course of fifteen years previous to 1808, in the records of the first parish, resolving to repair the first parish meeting house, and as many subsequent votes rescinding the former ones, at the same time when the meeting house had stood since the year 1763, and was not large enough to accommodate one half of the parish at that time. If any use is to be made of history on this subject, it is to inculcate this admonition, “ *Guard against disputes in building a new meeting house.*”

1760. The episcopal church in Dedham, commenced. In the year 1768, it came under the direction of the Rev. Wm. Clark. A small church was then built by a few persons in Dedham and the neighbouring towns. It has already been stated what treatment this gentleman met with here, during the revolutionary war. After he had obtained a small pension from the British government, he resided sometime in New Brunswick, but he afterwards came to Quincy, where he spent the remainder of his days. From Mr. Clark’s departure, to 1791, there was occasionally preaching in the society, through the exertion of bishop Parker. In 1791,

the reverend William Montague came into this church and became its rector, and continued in that office until June, 1818, when he was dismissed by the bishop. In June, 1818, the episcopal church was regularly organised as a religious society, after much opposition. November, 1821. The reverend Isaac Boyle, was at the unanimous request of the members, instituted rector over the church. For reasons which need not be mentioned, the former afflictions of this society cannot be stated in this place.

Those persons who left the first parish in 1818, built a new meeting house in the summer of 1819, and in February, 1822, became incorporated under the name of the "proprietors of the new meeting house in Dedham." The reverend Ebenezer Burgess was ordained over that society March 14, 1821. In the same month, his church adopted a new creed and covenant, which is published under the title of "A brief summary of christian doctrines, and form of covenant." Four different forms of church covenant had previous to this, been adopted in the first church at different times. The members of the baptist society in this town, who seceded from the third parish in June, 1811, became incorporated with the first baptist society in Medfield, over which society, the reverend William Gamel was the ordained minister.

CHAPTER X.

Petition for grant of land for a township. List of freemen admitted townsmen previous to 1647. Succession in the ministry. School page. Parish funds and benefactors. Town and parish expenses. Divisions of the land, and descriptions of property. Notices of manufactories. Tables of mortality and comparative longevity. Memoranda for natural history. Local customs. Suggested improvements. Rural appearances. Conclusion.

Petition for the grant of Dedham Township.—MAY it please the honoured Court, to ratify unto your humble petitioners (your grant,) formerly made of a plantation above the Falls, that we may possess all that land, which is left out of former grants, upon that side of Charles river, and upon the other side five miles square. To have and enjoy all those lands, meadows, woods and other grounds, together with all the waters and other benefits whatsoever, now being or that may be in the compass of the aforesaid limits, to us with our associates, heirs and assigns forever. First to be freed from all country charges for four years. Secondly to be free from military exercises in our said town for four years, except some extraordinary occasion require them.

Thirdly, that such distribution or allotments of land as are due and performed, be confirmed by the grantors or their successors.

Fourthly, that we may have countenance from this honoured court for the well ordering the non-age of our society, according to the best rule : and to that purpose to assign unto us a constable that may regard peace and truth.

Fifthly, to distinguish our town by the name of Contentment, or otherwise as you shall please.

Sixthly, we entreat such other helps, as your wisdom shall know best in favor to grant unto us, for our well improving of what we are intrusted withal, unto us in particular, but especially to the general good of this weal public, in succeeding times, subscribed by all who are in covenant at present, 10 day 7 month, 1636. Signed by nineteen persons.

Ordered, That said plantation to be settled above Charles river, have three years immunity from public charges, as Concord had from the first day of May next. The name of the plantation to be Dedham. To enjoy all that land on the easterly and southerly side of Charles river, not formerly granted to any town and particular person, and have five miles square on the other side of the river.

LIST

OF FREEMEN WHO HAD BEEN ADMITTFD INTO DEDHAM BEFORE 1647.

Mr. John Allin,	John Rogers,	Peter Woodward,
Mr. Timothy Dalton,	Joseph Shawe,	John Baker,
Mr. Thomas Carter,	Nathan Aldis, deacon,	Nathaniel Whiting,
Mr. Ralph Wheelock,	Daniel Fisher,	Anthony Fisher,
Mr. John Hunting,	Michael Metcalf,	Andrew Dewing,
Mr. ——— Pruden,	John Bullard,	George Barber,
Mr. Henry Phillips,	Joshua Fisher,	Robert Onion,
Francis Chickering, deac.	Ferdinando Adams,	Robert Feashe,
Abraham Shaw,	Thomas Wight,	John Gay,
Edward Allyne,	Samuel Morse,	Lambert Genery,
John Frayre,	Nicholas Phillips,	Samuel Guile,
Eleazer Lusher,	John Morse,	John Ellis,
Robert Hinsdale,	John Page,	Daniel Morse,
Edward Kempe,	Michael Powell,	Thomas Alcocke,
John Lenson,	Joseph Kingsbury	John Batchellor,
John Dwight,	Nathaniel Colborne,	Joseph Morse.
Henry Smith,	Timothy Dwight,	

SUCCESSION IN THE MINISTRY.

FIRST PARISH,

(Church gathered November 8, 1638.)

Names of ministers.	Time of ordination.	Time of decease.	Remarks.
John Allin,	April 24, 1639.	Aug. 26, 1671.	} Is dismissed for the purpose of being president of Middlebury college, Vermont.
William Adams,	Dec. 3, 1673.	Aug. 17, 1695.	
Joseph Belcher,	Nov. 29, 1693.	April 27, 1723.	
Samuel Dexter,	May 6, 1724.	Jan. 29, 1755.	
Jason Haven,	Feb. 5, 1756.	May 17, 1803.	
Joshua Bates,	March 6, 1803.	Feb. 20, 1818.	
Alvan Lamson,	Oct. 29, 1818.		

SECOND PARISH,

(Incorporated November, 1730. Church gathered June 23, 1736.)

Thomas Balch,	June 30, 1736.	Jan. 8, 1774.	
Jabez Chickering,	July 3, 1776.	Mar. 12, 1812.	
William Cogswell,	April 26, 1815.		

THIRD PARISH,

(Incorporated January, 1736. Church gathered June 4, 1735.)

Josiah Dwight,	June 4, 1735.		Dismissed in 1742.
Andrew Tyler,	Nov. 30, 1743.		Dismissed Dec. 17, 1772.
Thomas Thatcher,	June 7, 1789.	Oct. 19, 1812.	
John White,	April 20, 1814.		

EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN DEDHAM.

William Clark,	Dec. 1768.	} Is ordained by the bishop of London, and appointed missionary here. May, 1777, is carried away by force to Boston, because he was opposed to the revolution. } Comes to Dedham, and becomes rector of the church. July 1818, is dismissed from office by bishop Griswold. } Is regularly instituted rector over the church by bishop Griswold.
William Montague,	1791.	
Isaac Boyle,	Nov. 22, 1821.	

NEW MEETING HOUSE SOCIETY.

Ebenezer Burgess, | Mar. 14, 1821.

BAPTIST SOCIETY IN DEDHAM AND MEDFIELD,

(Incorporated June 9, 1811.)

William Gamel, | Over the churches in Medfield and Dedham.

PROGRESS OF SCHOOLS.

Years.	Amount granted in one year for schools	Number of persons taxable for schools.	Spirit for schools.	How far adequate.	Prevailing traits of character at several periods.
1644	£20	80	Highest.	Fully adequate.	Religious, harmonious, patriotic, successful in their enterprises. The town devoted lands sufficient to support one school master all the year.
1664	£20	84	high.	Adequate this year.	Character of the people nearly the same, but the town begins to relax in support of Schools, and is indicted for neglect in 1674.
1684	£10	118	Lower	Quite inadequate	Vacancy in the ministry. Four candidates refuse the ministry here. Dr William Avery gave sixty pounds for a Latin school, which was not appropriated that purpose.
1704	Old tenor. £20	155	Lower still.	Not sufficient to support one school master six months.	Disorderly elections, church quarrels, bad manners, bad records. Incompetent town officers. 1691, the town again indicted for neglect in supporting schools. The people are dispersed into parishes.
1724	Old tenor. £80	218	Lowest	Few could have any school instruction.	The character of people nearly the same. The school farm was sold about this time, and the proceeds thereof misappropriated.
1744	Old tenor. £25	334	Low.	Greatly deficient.	Michael Metcalf, Nathaniel Kingsbury, Mr. Damon, and Mr. Dexter, seeing the deplorable want of school education, make donations to support schools, and to teach good manners.
1764	£56	1919 Inhabitants.	Low.	Eight hundred and fifty-eight children under 16 years.	We still hear of quarrels in the first church. Ecclesiastical councils, and dismission of minister in the third parish.
1784	£150	2,000 Inhabitants	Rising.	Greatly deficient.	
1804	\$1200	2,100 Inhabitants.	Rising.	Many children have only a few week's schooling.	
1824	\$2000	650 Inhabitants taxed.	Rising.		There are eleven districts, some quite small. The masters employed are many of them quite incompetent, as the school committee of 1826 found by examination.

OF FUNDS TO SUPPORT PUBLIC WORSHIP. DONORS.

Eight shares out of the five hundred and twenty-two shares into which the Dedham common lands were divided in the year 1659, were given to the church to support a teaching church officer, in the town. From the sale of these lands a fund has accumulated which added to the rents of a few house lots, amounts to the annual income of seven hundred and sixty dollars. Other donors to the first parish were doctor William Avery, honorable Samuel Dexter, honorable Edward Dowse, of the clock in the parish steeple. Mr. John Doggett, of interior clock.

The second parish in June 1824, was organized with powers to hold property in trust, for various purposes. It does now hold funds to support the communion table, public worship, poor widows, and the gospel ministry.

The annual income of the third parish from lands and money given by many persons amounts to two hundred and eighty dollars. The reverend Thomas Thatcher gave this parish land and money.

Samuel Colburn in the year 1756, by his last will gave one hundred and thirty-four acres of valuable land to the Episcopal church, in Dedham. In 1794 the legislature granted to the rector, wardens, and vestry of the church, a power to lease the land; and before the year 1818, more than half of the land had been sold and the proceeds spent. Esther Sprague and Elizabeth Sumner were liberal donors of this church.

Present net annual income from rents on long leases is seven hundred dollars.

In the year 1826, the reverend Ebenezer Burgess built at his own expense a spacious vestry to the new meeting house.

It thus appears that funds for pious uses, to a considerable amount, and of ancient origin exist in this town. To a community which has not much recorded experience of the abuses to which funds of this kind are liable, the history of those funds may be instructive.

The funds of the first parish began in 1659, and in three important particulars have been managed or appropriated contrary to what must be the presumed will of the donors.

First, It cannot be believed that when all the inhabitants gave lands, that they intended the benefit of them, should be confined to the oldest and richest society in the town, to the exclusion of four or five other parishes having greater need of them.

Secondly, It cannot be believed that the inhabitants of Dedham in 1659, who made such exertions to establish a pure church, who talked much of their power to open and shut the doors of the church, and who would not permit the town to have any participation in the choice of their two first pastors, could ever have consented to such a method of controuling their funds, as is now adopted, one which virtually gives the parish the power of controuling them in exclusion of the church.

Thirdly, Of all heresies, they probably would have deemed that the greatest, which would place the funds by them given, under the controul of a Unitarian parish, to the exclusion of an Orthodox church as has been done by a change of opinion and laws.

The constitution of the State adopted in 1780, and explained and applied in 1821, in a lawsuit respecting these very funds, has had the effect transferring from the church its property, and giving it to the parish. This must be justified on revolutionary, and not on legal principles. But after all perhaps, a christian society will not have much cause to regret these variations from the presumed will of the donors. They have been affected, not suddenly and by a violent revolution in the State, but by a constitutional and general law, rendered necessary by a change in government and opinions. Had not this gradual revolution taken place, it is probable, that some other more violent change would be affected, such as happened when Henry VIII, and other protestant princes, on the conversion of their subjects from popery, permitted their rapacious courtiers to seize the inheritance of the proscribed church for their private uses.

Experience teaches us, that it is not so much the wrong appropriation of church funds that should be feared and guarded against, as the spending of them. The majority in each of the five religious societies in this town have virtually the power to controul the use of their funds, the members of each society would no doubt repel the proposition, to spend the principal of their funds. They would

probably understand such a proposition as it really is, an attempt to violate the trust in their hands, which, in its effects must defraud the next and succeeding generations. But some of these societies have done those things, and borrowed money which have ultimately diminished the funds. So imperfectly is the obligation understood, of duly appropriating parish funds, that many have not scrupled to borrow on their credit, and have thereby imposed on them a permanent incumbrance, which is the same thing as spending the principal, when the use only was given to them. It is in this indirect manner of spending the principal of their parish funds that danger is most to be apprehended.

TOWN EXPENSES

AT DIFFERENT PERIODS, SHOWING THE RATIO OF INCREASE.

1732.	Deputy's pay, minister's salary, poor tax, incidental expenses,	£207 : 1 : 4
1733.	" " " " " " " "	178 : 11 : 10
1734.	" " " " " " " "	175 : 14 : 4
		Federal currency.
1793.	Taxes for highways, poor, schools, and all other town taxes,	\$1900 : 00
1796.	" " " " " " " "	2940 : 00
1800.	" " " " " " " "	3400 : 00
1805.	" " " " " " " "	4600 : 00
1808.	" " " " " " " "	5160 : 00
1815.	" " " " " " " "	5690 : 00
1826.	" " " " " " " "	6981 : 82

ITEMS

OF TOWN EXPENSES, FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL, 1826.

Highway taxes,	- - - - -	\$2000 : 00
For bridges,	- - - - -	428 : 58
For support of schools,	- - - - -	2000 : 00
Pay of town officer, stationary, and lawsuits,	- - - - -	561 : 70
Support of poor,	- - - - -	1991 : 54
Total,	- - - - -	\$6981 : 82

ANNUAL EXPENSES

FOR SUPPORTING PUBLIC WORSHIP.

In the 1st parish, ordinary annual expense in late years,	\$1300
In the 2nd " " " " " "	600
In the 3d " " " " " "	640
In the new meeting house society	850
In the episcopal church,	900
In the society of baptists, about	300
Total annual expense, not including cost of building } and repairing houses of public worship, }	\$4590

DIVISIONS OF THE LAND.

- 24,000 acres of land, by estimation, divided into
 220 tenements, each having a house, barn and 15 acres of land or more.
 397 dwelling houses.
 500 owners of real estate, not including those who own stock in factories.
 685 males taxed in the town, including 91 non-residents.

PROGRESS

OF POPULATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

In 1765, in the three parishes, the number of inhabitants was,	1567
In 1790, " " " " " " " "	1659
In 1800, " " " " " " " "	1973
In 1810, " " " " " " " "	2172
In 1820, " " " " " " " "	2485

A much greater increase of inhabitants for some years to come, is anticipated, principally on account of manufacturing establishments. The owners of land have generally the fee simple, and their estates are not frequently encumbered with mortgages, annuities, rents, or life estates. Of the two hundred and twenty tenements above enumerated, it may be estimated that not more than twenty have estates mortgaged, who have not a good prospect of paying the mortgage within a few years. There are forty tenements in the village, the owner's title to which is a lease for nine hundred and ninety-nine years, subject to an annual rent.

Descriptions of property.—Stone court house and jail; four congregational meeting houses; an episcopal church; a baptist meeting house; eleven small school houses; the woollen factories; two cotton factories; four saw mills; two paper mills; two grist mills; five manufactories for making chaises and carriages; an establishment for making machinery for other factories; Warren's establishment for making ploughs; five taverns; eleven retail stores; two apothecaries; one printing press; one bank, capital one hundred thousand dollars; one mutual fire insurance company, having the two first years of its operations, insured more than four hundred houses, and property to the amount of four hundred and seventy thousand dollars.

Notices of attempts to establish Manufactories, and their present situation.—In the latter part of Mr. Jefferson's ad-

ministration, the interruptions of commerce created a strong desire to be no longer dependent on it, for articles of the first necessity. On a question, wherein the honour and independence of the country was supposed to be much involved, there was much said and written. Some successful attempts at Pawtucket previous to the year 1808, and the favouring gale of popular good will hurried many at that time, into hasty attempts, to establish manufactures on a large scale. I will describe the operations of a single corporation, those of the Norfolk Cotton Factory ; the first in this town, which engaged in these attempts. As their methods of proceeding were similar to that of many hundred of other companies and corporations, at that time, I am justified in the minuteness of the detail. Here at Dedham the most enterprising men in the town looked around them ; they saw that there was here water power, capital, and an ardent desire to be no longer dependent on foreign looms. Nothing was wanting but skill, in the operations to be undertaken ; and for that deficiency they had no doubt of soon finding a remedy in their own experience. As no one had a sufficient capital, for an entire establishment, the joint capital of many was used. In 1808 after a year's preparation, thirty individuals were united by an incorporating act. Among these were merchants, traders, farmers, blacksmiths, hatters, a lawyer, a physician, and an innkeeper, but not a single man, who had any skill in the art of manufactruing cotton goods. In organizing their corporation, the necessity of entrusting all their complicated operations, to the controul of one mind, was not perceived by the members, but they were guided it seems in this business by republican maxims and models. They entrusted the executive authority to a president, three directors, clerk and treasurer, whose distinct and appropriate duties were defined in a lengthy code of by-laws. The three directors were required to remain at the factory, one week each, and alternately : but no one was permitted to do any thing of importance without the concurrence of his colleagues. All the officers were chosen annually. During six or seven years the annual meetings were fully attended. After the business was done and the officers had made a flattering report of net gains, the members partook of a good dinner. Thus formed, the corporation began business, built a large wooden

factory on the upper dam, on Mother Brook : placed in it the tub wheel, and common water frames. When the cotton arrived at the factory, it was divided into small parcels and sent to the neighbouring houses to be picked by hand : over the picking department one and sometimes two agents presided. When the cotton was spun, then again it was sent abroad to be wove by hand. Over this department of weaving an agent presided. The spacious store-rooms adjoining the factory were soon crowded with cotton yarn, and cotton cloths ; where all the goods were retailed excepting what were sent to numerous factors abroad. As their plan was to retail their own goods at their own counter, it became desirable to have a pretty good assortment, and then they began to make sattinets; and the legislature granted them leave so to do, by an additional section to their charter. The high price of cotton goods at that time permitted them to move on unconcerned about the wages of the workmen and agents ; and money flowed pretty freely into the hands of persons, who never before or since that time have been so well off to live. The affairs of this company remained in nearly the same situation until the end of the war in 1814.

The report of net gains at their annual meetings made them joyful and festive anniversaries. The stockholders had not, it is true, yet received any dividends, but the favorable estimate of all their joint property, led them to anticipate large future dividends. Nor was this all. The stock holders were regarded in the favourable light of doing something for their country, as well as a good deal for themselves. The inhabitants felt a degree of pride in having a cotton factory in town, and whenever their friends from the interior visited them, the first thing thought of, was to mention that there was a new cotton factory in the town, and they must go and see its curious and wonderful machinery. At the conclusion of the late war, the corporation was caught with twenty thousand dollars worth of goods on hand, and with forty thousand dollars in debts due to it, in eight or ten states. When cotton goods were so high, as they were during the war, an attempt to manufacture cheaply, was almost superfluous. The peace let in such a flood of cheap goods, that unless cotton cloths could be made cheaply, they could not be made at all. It was then that the genius of man began to

interest itself in improving all the operations of spinning, weaving, and bleaching. The changes in this particular, in the Norfolk cotton factory, were not important, because it did not survive for a sufficient length of time. It however commenced the career of change and improvement. The tub wheel gave way for the common water wheel; then came the cotton picker, not that silent and efficient machine now in use, but a buzzing and noisy thing; when it was first put in operation, it sent forth such a scream that it alarmed some in the court house village. Before the power loom and the double speeder could come to the assistance of this company, it was deemed expedient to sell the whole establishment.

Frederick A. Taft was the first regular manufacturer of cotton goods in the town, and he soon showed the difference there is between the produce of labour employed on good machinery, and directed by a single experienced agent, and that which is derived from labour on the imperfect machinery first used, and under the controul of the inexperienced officers of an aggregate corporation.

In 1814, the price of picking cotton by hand, was 5 cts.

The price of weaving by the yard, varied from 5 to 14 cts.

The price of good cotton shirting 50 cts.

The loss to this corporation and many others, was great.

In 1826, the price of weaving common }
cotton cloth, per yard, } was 9 mills.

The price of weaving fine cloths for calicoes, was 14-4 cts.

The price of cotton shirting, was 16 cents.

The price of common cloths from 10 to 11 cents.

And there was sufficient profit to the manufacturer.

The Dedham manufacturing company has machinery to produce six thousand yards per week, and seventy persons employed.

Mr. Taft's company produces four thousand yards of fine cotton cloths per week.

Benjamin Bussey, Esq. has recently erected woollen factories on the two upper dams on Mother Brook. His two brick factories, his two wooden factories on the upper dam, with all their appendages of machine shops, stores, dye-houses, dwelling houses, and other buildings which will of course start up, will of themselves, constitute a little village. The plan of this entire establishment, gives it the capacity to manufacture two hundred and forty yards of fine broad-

cloth every day. This establishment is the pride of Dedham, and its owner a great benefactor to those whom he employs, and of the town. It is not so much the extent of these works, as the skill displayed therein, that is to be admired, which in any event secures a good profit, and thereby places them on a permanent foundation.

There are five establishments in this town for making chaises and carriages of all kinds. Some of these are extensive.

Jesse Warren, having succeeded in constructing ploughs in a form much approved, has for several years past made it his whole business to manufacture them on a pretty large scale.

The names of ten persons, inhabitants of this town, are recollected who have been recorded in the patent office at Washington, as the inventors of new and useful machines ; among which may be enumerated, *a new model for a loom, for a flie machine, for a dough kneeder, a rock driller, a machine to weave a hat body, and one to make paper in an improved way.* On the list of inventors, Mr. John Goulding merits particular notice. On the subject of new improvements, the world has grown sceptical, and it is unwilling to allow that any suggested improvement really merits that character, until it be put in successful operation, for experience shows that the progress of real improvement is quite a different thing from the history of patents and inventions. With this test Mr. Goulding's inventions must be judged. He gave evidence of his practical skill in the first operations of Mr. Bussey's woollen factories, enabling those works to manufacture much more cheaply than others. He has recently examined such machines and manufacturing establishments in England and France, as would most probably suggest to his mind useful knowledge in similar works in this country. Since his return from Europe, he has succeeded in two important inventions. *By a new arrangement of the pipes in the boiler of the steam engine, he has made so great a saving in fuel, that steam power produced by a peat fire is cheaper, in this town of rivers and streams, than water power.* He has erected an extensive machine shop on the dry land, near a peat meadow, north west of this village, wherein machinery for other factories is made by steam power. This is the test of his invention. *He has likewise invented a loom to weave carpets by steam or water power, a thing here-*

tofore unknown, and deemed impossible. Practical skill, acquired by much experience of mechanical operations, united to an inventive genius alone, enable men to do such things.

THE EFFECTS

Of introducing manufactures and mechanical employments into the town, is exhibited in the progress of society.

In the year 1796, the population was nearly the same as it had been for fifty years previous.	In twenty-five years previous to the year 1826, it had increased nearly one quarter, and was rapidly increasing.
In 1793, the sources of income were the products of the land, wood, ship timber, vegetables, but-ter, labour on the land, small trading, a few mechanical employments.	In 1826, the sources of income were interest of money, of stocks, labour in the woolen and cotton factories, carrying in stages and baggage waggons, many kinds of mechanical employments, several additional articles in the produce of the land, labour on farms considerably increased, rents of houses.
Amount of town and parish expenses one year, three thousand nine hundred and forty dollars, and paid with difficulty.	In 1826, the amount of town and parish expenses was eleven thousand five hundred and seventy-one dollars. The burthen less than in 1796.
Money so scarce that ten years before it had been the principal cause of a rebellion.	In 1826, it was so plenty that loans were made at five per cent. by inhabitants of this town.
The most enterprising, at this and former periods, sought the western wilderness for a residence.	In late years, men of genius and capital, and the industrious poor, have sought this place, where there is variety and abundance of employment.

TABLE

OF MORTALITY AND COMPARATIVE LONGEVITY.

In February, 1796, the reverend Jason Haven having completed the fortieth year of his ministry, preached a sermon on the occasion, and therein stated, that in the last forty years, five hundred and twenty-nine persons had died in his parish.

406 of which were under the the age of 70 years.

72 between the age of 70 and 80 years.

94 between the age of 80 and 90 years, and

9 over the age of 90 years.

In the first 19 years of his ministry, 1 in 80 died annually.

In the last 21 years of his ministry, 1 in 53 died annually.

In this last period, the dissentary, the small pox, and other epidemics, had occasioned unusual mortality.

February 20, 1818. Dr. Bates, on leaving his parish, preached a sermon on the occasion, and stated therein, that in the fifteen years of his ministry, there had been two hundred and seventy-three deaths in the parish, of which

30	were	under	the	age	of	1	year.
23	"	between	"	"	"	1	and 7 years.
6	"	"	"	"	"	7	" 15 "
35	"	"	"	"	"	15	" 25 "
55	"	"	"	"	"	25	" 50 "
42	"	"	"	"	"	50	" 70 "
82	"	above	"	"	"	70	years.

Included in the last class, were five over ninety years, and one ninety-eight years. This statement is remarkable for the small number of deaths among children, and the great proportion of those whose ages exceeded seventy years, it appearing that one in every three and a half arrived at the age of seventy. No table which I have seen gives a result so favourable to the chance of long life.

June, 1816. The reverend William Cogswell, of the second parish, stated in a sermon, afterwards published, that in the last eighty years, the number of deaths in his parish had been five hundred and eighty-eight.

Of that number, 481 died under the age of 70 years.

56 " between " " " 70 and 80 yrs.

38 " " " " " 80 and 90 yrs.

13 whose ages exceeded 90 yrs.

1 in every 5 1-2 arrived at the age of 70 years.

1 in 80 died annually.

Reverend Thomas Thatcher, of the third parish, in 1800, made the following statement in a published sermon.

In the twenty years of his ministry in his parish, there had been one hundred and twenty-eight deaths.

102 under the age of 70 years.

9 between the ages of 70 and 80 years.

15 " " " " 80 and 90 years.

1 " " " " 90 " 100 years.

1 supposed to exceed 100 years.

1 in 6 and a fraction, arrived at the age of 70 years.

RECAPITULATION.

In the 1st parish, from 1756 to 1796, 1 in 5 arrived at the age of 70.

In the 1st parish, from 1803 to 1818, 1 in 3 1-2 " " " " 70.

In the 2nd parish, from 1736 to 1816, 1 in 5 1-2 " " " " 70.

In the 3rd parish, from 1780 to 1800, 1 in 6 " " " " 70.

Compare this with the most approved tables of longevity.

In France, 1 in 31 arrive at the age of 70.

In London, 1 in 10 " " " " " 70.

In Philadelphia, 1 in 15 " " " " " 70.

In Connecticut, 1 in 8 " " " " " 70.

This is considered the ratio for the healthy parts of New England.

From the data afforded by these ministers, and other evidence of the population in each parish at the times when these records were kept, it may be stated that including all the parishes, and all the times above enumerated, one in seventy died annually. Compare this result with other tables.

In Portsmouth it is computed that 1 in 48 to 49 die annually.

In Salem, 1 in 48 to 49 die annually.

In Boston, 1 in 47 to 49 die annually.

In Philadelphia, 1 in 44 to 50 die annually.

In the United States generally, 1 in 39 to 40 die annually.

In the great cities in Europe, 1 in 22 die annually.

In England, 1 in 49 die annually.

The soil in the first parish denoted to be the most healthy by the tables, is dry. The water is pure and drawn from wells from twenty to thirty feet deep, and comes up through sand or gravel. The harsh north east wind in passing over Muddy Pond woods is somewhat broken and softened, after it passes out of Boston harbour. There are many little streams besides Charles river and Neponset. There are a great abundance of trees and evergreens. The time may come when the physicians in Boston will regard it as a maxim, that they ought to direct a certain class of patients to go out of the grosser atmosphere of Boston, and retire to Dedham village, where they will be defended by the Blue Hills and Muddy Pond woods.

Memoranda for natural history.—On both sides of Charles river, in that section of it which flows near and north of Dedham village, is a peat meadow, containing several hundred acres. The river at this place, on its surface descends six or seven inches in a mile, has perpendicular sides, and a bottom of loose light mud, into which the setting pole penetrates several feet without much resistance. The surface of this meadow in all places, is even with the water in the river, when it begins to overflow its banks. The meadow is of different degrees of hardness in different

places, but may be pierced with an iron rod every where, by the strength of one man's hand, excepting when it strikes imbedded roots and trees. The meadow mud has various depths, varying from one to twenty feet, and rests on a gravel bottom. In some places the meadows are sufficiently hard to support a road, provided care be taken to spread brush on the surface before the gravel is carted on to it. In some places the gravel will sink, as it did under the turnpike near the village. A mile and a half north of the village, the river runs over a hard bottom, which at some former period, may have been a natural dam, causing a pond of water to exist in that precise place, now occupied by the meadow mud. That such has actually been the fact, is probable. The whole mass of the loose mud composing the meadows, is certainly a formation of roots, leaves and trees, with greater or less quantities of earth deposited there by the stream and floods. The surface of the meadow exactly corresponds with the surface of the water at a former time, and has evidently been modified by it. Two or three inches from the surface of this meadow, commences a stratum of peat, from three to four feet in depth. Before peat is taken from its bed, it is black heavy mud, and its whole mass is homogeneous. When it is prepared for fuel, it exhibits numerous fibres, resembling a flax thread, which hold the parts together after the peat is dried. In much the greatest part of this meadow, there is good peat of the above description, but in many places over several square rods contiguous, peat seems not yet to have been formed, or to have been only partially or imperfectly formed. Nothing on the surface of the meadow, or in its interior formation denotes the cause of this, and we are left to conjecture the cause; which may be the existence there of too great a quantity of ligneous substances, which have not yet had time to be decomposed since the water has been removed from the meadows. Or it may be that too great a quantity of water may have existed there, which would have prevented the decomposition of vegetable matter, by excluding the air therefrom. Near the upland, there is imperfect peat, the cause of which is easily discovered, in there not being a due proportion of earth, wood and water. That portion of the meadow which lies between the peat stratum and gravel bottom, is similar in its appearance and properties to im-

perfect peat; it is of a reddish colour when dried, is light and affords very little heat. It is the material for making peat, and whenever the air shall have penetrated it for a sufficient length of time, as it may possibly do by means of the fibres, it will become good peat. An inquiry may here arise, whether the whole of this meadow is not now in a progress to the more perfect formation of peat, both in quantity and quality? The meadows of Charles river, we have seen, were covered much of the time with water, before the settlement of the town. This must have prevented the formation of peat. The peat in England and Ireland is much deeper, than that on Charles river meadows. The peat in some places on Neponset meadows is eight or ten feet deep. Those meadows are likewise much drier than those of Charles river. The fowl meadow grass began to grow in that meadow about the year 1700. There are only a few places dry enough on the meadows of Charles river to produce that crop, although during several of the last dry summers, it has sprung up in several places where it never was before observed.

Such is the situation of the peat meadows at present. I have not observed any fact which seems to support the hypothesis of Dr. Cutler, who has inquired whether the fibres observed in peat, are not evidence of a vegetable organization of a moss *sui generis*? The new properties which meadow mud acquires, namely, that of being inflammable and fibrous in the process of decomposition, and new combination differs not materially from the changes under the controul of a chemist, excepting in the length of time required to produce them. About ten years ago it was first mentioned as a discovery, that near this village there was abundance of peat. Since that time a small quantity has been dug every season.

It may be worthy of notice, that such a variety of native forest trees should grow on a tract of land so limited as that of Dedham. Of the oak, are found seven varieties, from the shrub oak to the stately white oak, of the walnut, three varieties, white and yellow pine, hemlock, red cedar, and white cedar, white beech, white maple, white and yellow birch, butternut, wild cherry, button wood, hornbeam, poplar, ash, elm, two varieties. The locust, the lime tree, the balsam and the fir balsam, the mountain ash,

flourish in our soil. The white oak is the favourite of the soil, that white oak which yields such a strong heavy and durable material for the works of the wheelwright and ship-builder, and which furnishes such excellent fuel. There are only a few solitary oaks which may now claim to be cotemporaries with the pilgrims, but all our forest are of modern growth. The white oaks, on particular pieces of land, have been all cut off in several successive generations. When one crop is cut off, another immediately succeeds. The young trees start up with a rapid growth, come to maturity in twenty-five or thirty years, when it is good policy to cut them all off again. How many times, in any given spot, the trees may have been thus cut in successive periods, is not certainly known, probably five or six times. Now these last generation of trees are inferior to the primitive stocks, both in size and in usefulness, although equally good for fuel. The tree which originates from a stump, has necessarily imperfect roots. It may have a few young and healthy roots, but these are few in proportion to the rapidly growing stocks above ground, which receive the greatest part of their nourishment from the old roots. The old roots will decay from age, or from the want of a proper circulation of sap, caused by the cutting off the trunk. We need not assign a cause, since the effect is well known. The experience of every farmer teaches him that the forest trees which spring from stumps come to a premature old age. Not so with trees which spring from acorns or from a spontaneous origin. Their roots are young and healthy and extend in every direction, when the tree is large its roots are proportionably so. Does not this short history of the oak, show that an important era has arrived in regard to their use and cultivation? We have no forest laws nor hereditary lords to protect our most valuable oak forests. I see nothing but enlightened self interest, which will protect them from an indiscriminate destruction. If this does not influence the intelligent owner of the soil, the voice of patriotism, the spirit of poetry will in vain invoke him; they will in vain inform him that he who plants or nourishes an oak forest for the future navy, rears a better monument of his usefulness than most of those who write books, or flourish with a little brief authority in public employments.

There are some places where there has been a succes-

sion of different kind of trees, yellow and white pines have succeeded a forest of oak, and oaks again have succeeded pine trees.

The soil of Dedham, particularly that of the village plain, nourishes almost every kind of fruit trees and shrubs, which will grow in New England. The pear trees of an hundred varieties transplanted into the gardens from the north of France and the nurseries of Long Island, thrive well. In the garden of Mr. Samuel Richards, where is the greatest variety of fruit trees, and where too may be learned the greatest variety of experiments on transplanting, no decisive evidence is yet afforded of the utility of trees of foreign nurseries, over those in our own immediate neighbourhood, excepting that of their cost.

Experiments in agriculture worthy of notice are few. During the late war attempts were made in Massachusetts to cultivate wheat. It was suggested that a new species of spring wheat brought from Londonderry, N. H., would succeed on the lands near the sea board. It appears that many successful experiments were made, and were fully reported and recorded in the journals of the day. If these reports alone are consulted, they will lead to the conclusion, that blast on wheat is to be attributed to the seed, rather than to the climate. But one thing is certain, wheat crops are now no where heard of on the sea coast. The unsuccessful experiments I believe were not reported. In 1813 and 1814, experiments were made in this town, and both were most decisive. The straw was sufficiently large to have yielded thirty bushels by the acre, yet it was so much blasted that it was scarcely worth reaping.

In Dedham are some swamps and low lands, which were formerly esteemed of little value, the water being so frequently on them, permitted nothing but a coarse meadow grass almost worthless grow thereon. When several patches of these lands were broken up about ten years ago and planted with potatoes, and afterwards laid down and sowed with herds grass, I well recollect the frequent remark I heard made of them, that these spots of land would soon go back again, and produce nothing but their former crop of coarse grass. Ten years of experience have now shown that lands of this kind, when properly cultivated, are the most valuable mowing lands in town.

Gypsum has been used in various ways, but I have never heard of a single case where it was done with success.

Suggested improvements.—The following subjects are suggested, not with the intention of asserting, that all or any of them should draw forth immediate exertions, or that it is determined upon due deliberation, that real improvements can be effected in the way proposed. They are intended only as proper subjects of inquiry. The success of those splendid works in other states, which facilitate intercourse, has excited a strong desire, that the people of this commonwealth should engage in similar and great plans. If providence has afforded this people any great occasion, or opportunity for such great enterprizes, as that of making rail-ways or canals over the western mountains, they will be undertaken ; but in the mean time the people of this town, and in this part of the State, should not forget, that very near to them, they have a canal somewhat broader and longer than that of New-York, to wit, the Atlantic ocean ; and that therefore the public spirit and energies of the community can only be directed to the more humble, yet laudable exertions, of rendering more perfect our civil and literary institutions ; and particularly the roads, the villages and the manufactories. With intentions thus explained, it may not be improper to inquire, whether the following objects should not in due time engage attention.

A house of correction for the county of Norfolk, combining all the advantages of an institution of this kind. The county buildings of this kind at present, are deficient, on which account convicts have been sent to the house of correction in Worcester.

A poor house, and farm of suitable extent for the town of Dedham, affording sufficient room to employ, as well as support the poor. The town have now only a small poor house, but no land on which the idle, the improvident and vicious can be coerced to labour.

A town house built with stones of a different order of architecture from the Court House, to form a contrast with it, the lower story to have fire proof offices for a bank, for the insurance office, and the town offices.

A new Episcopal church.

A good social library.

The introduction of some new business suitable for females whose health and habits will not permit them to labour in the great factories, and which may serve as a substitute of the now abandoned art of brading straw hats.

In husbandry, the following subjects, not within the jurisdiction of the agricultural society, may be proposed.

Bringing to a more perfect cultivation that portion of meadow land near upland and swamps, which by being mixed with gravel and loam will produce great crops of fowl meadow or herds grass, and bear drought better than upland or peat meadow.

An experiment to be made in burning, or torrying a portion of that clay bed between east street and the village, for the purpose of manure. Which is a mode of enriching land in some parts of England and Ireland highly beneficial.

An attempt to ascertain with certainty, whether there is not a bed of Marle a little north of Wigwam Pond, of which there are strong indications.

Lining the roads more frequently with trees of oak, elm, or of any other kind of tree, excepting that ill looking, short lived sappy exotic, the Lombardy poplar.

Holding in great esteem every thrifty young oak tree which springs up under such circumstances, as shows it may be used in building the future navy.

Planting a suitable number of trees around the meeting house in the third parish. That spot is on the top of a hill, and the house of public worship there, looks too naked, especially as it is high in proportion to its dimensions in other respects.

A handsome open common in the village east of the new court house, ornamented with trees, and protected from all nuisances. This will conduce to health and to ornament, and will afford the passing stranger a view of an elegant court house, the new meeting house, and the dwelling house of judge Haven and Mrs. Ames. But above all, it will prevent the reproach which a different use of that land now unoccupied would occasion. May no buildings or shops be erected on that ground, which shall give just occasion to the classic and travelled stranger to say; behold here the same profanation as at Rome; when the tents of pedlars and the stalls of Buffaloes stood within the Colliseum.

Local Customs.—Among the sports of Dedham is the common one of shooting at a dead turkey, or a dead goose. This sport is not inhuman, and yet it answers the object in-

tended, amusement and skill in sharp shooting. As our legislature made an unavailing effort last winter to prevent cruelty in shooting at living marks, turkies, and other fowls, let the Dedham sportsmen propose their own custom as the appropriate remedy. This opportunity for shooting satisfies nearly every one, and we therefore seldom see a cruel boy creeping and crouching in our fields, with his murderous gun, making war on the birds which cheer our fields with their presence and music.

In the statute book is found a law creating the office of hogreave, now unnecessary, but formerly an important and responsible office, imposing on the incumbent the arduous duty of causing all the swine to wear great yokes on their necks, and rings in their snouts. When this office is to be filled at the annual meetings in March, every year, every person in the town, who has been married the year past, is sure to be promoted to that office, whether he be farmer, doctor, lawyer, or minister. In some other towns the custom prevails. After inquiry, I have failed to find any antiquary who can state the origin of the custom.

Of all the popular assemblies of the people, none can be more important in a free country, than town meetings. When they are tumultuous and disorderly, the government is in its most important branch, corrupted. Of this truth, the citizens of this town seem to be fully impressed, and their meetings are usually conducted with good order and decorum. When it is otherwise, it is owing to some temporary faction, who will start in doing mischief and committing disorder, before the sober men have time to correct the evil. There is one practice which has been so frequently resorted to in town meetings, that it may be denominated an established custom. When a measure has been proposed in town meeting, not agreeable to the wishes of a part of the inhabitants, and it is necessary that a committee should be appointed to prepare it for the decision of the whole town, the opposing party have not unfrequently attempted to defeat it, after the town has decided in favour of a committee, by nominating either incompetent men, or those who will entirely disregard the duty. As the moderator calls for a nomination, the opposers immediately shout the names of their candidates. The supporters of the measure likewise, knowing that they must be equally quick, make numerous nominations. In this confusion

of voices, and of the multitude of nominations, the moderator is usually under the necessity of calling for a new nomination, and then again with increased zeal do many persons instantly shout the names of their respective candidates.

At once a universal hubbub wild,
Of stuning sounds, and voices all confused
With loudest vehemence assault the ear.

If in this dilemma, the majority can succeed in voting the right of nomination to the moderator, and he have sufficient independence to do his duty, the committee of suitable men may be elected, otherwise the will of the town is defeated by the artifice. Did it ever occur to those persons who believe that such a practice is justifiable, that an artifice of this kind is in effect, as bad as riot or open force, since the tendency of both is to defeat the will of the town, a thing that should not be attempted, except by free debate and peaceable voting.

Rural scenes.—In the year 1826, this village was in a small compass; the inhabitants have had so strong an inclination to be near certain points, that the price of land was a thousand dollars per acre, at one place, and when other lands, equally eligible for building lots, not forty rods distant, might be purchased for half that sum. This whole plain, excepting about one hundred acres occupied by buildings, was well cultivated, having fruit trees and shades growing thereon. The old streets ornamented with elms, button-woods, and shrubbery. On High street stood the two congregational meeting houses, and the new court house. The new court house at present stands in an open field, containing more than two acres, and is equally well seen by the passenger on the road to Providence and Hartford. This edifice covers an area of ninety-eight feet by forty-eight, and has at each end a projection of ten feet from the main body of the building, with a pediment resting on four doric pillars which are nearly twenty-one feet high, and three feet ten inches in diameter at their base. The principal material of this building is a hewn white granite from a quarry eight miles west of it. Mr. Solomon Willard, of Boston, the architect, by conforming his plan of it so far as the use of the building and his means would permit, to the best models of antiquity, has perpetuated the evidence of his

skill and good taste,* and conferred a lasting obligation on the county.

The Norfolk and Bristol turnpike goes through the village, and is a great thoroughfare between the north and the south. The steam boats from New York land their passengers at Providence, and in a few hours afterwards, six or seven stages full may be frequently seen a mile south of the village descending into it, bringing sometimes the dust with them which they raise. Every other day the mail arrives on its way to Washington city. The number of those who assemble at the post office at the hour of arrival is not so great that each one must ask a question and be off, but custom allows the talkers and the quid nunes to remain and amuse or oppress their temporary audience with their remarks on all subjects.

Four or five concerts of music in a year, the performers at which come from Boston, and the neighbouring towns, attest an increasing attention to that art. Every Sunday morning, when the hour of worship has come, people in chaises and on feet are seen coming into the village, but none in waggons. Some go to the first parish meeting house. On the spot where that house now stands, one hundred and eighty years ago there stood a low building with a thatched roof, having no accommodation for a worshipping assembly, not even a plastered wall. Now you may see in the newly repaired meeting house, the stucco over the head, the inside clock, the outside clock, the handsomely decorated organ, the cushioned and carpeted pews. Across the road you will likewise see another new meeting house, in its exterior appearance, its size and beautiful proportions, greatly excelling most other country meeting houses. Its steeple is not so ambitious as the common New England steeple, to reach up high with a slim trunk, but is flatted down so that its base bears a more agreeable

* February term of the supreme court, 1827. The first session was held in this edifice. On that occasion, the governor, the judges, and all the members of the bar, and many spectators attended. Chief justice Parker delivered a dedicatory address. In this address, after attributing just praise to the architect, Mr. Willard, and to the master builders, Messrs. Bates and Damon, he made a comparison of this building with others most distinguished in the state. To this he gave the preference over the state house and the Worcester court house, because the materials are brick. In one respect, this excelled Suffolk court house, because in this last building, architectural beauty was not regarded. It excelled St. Paul's church and the new branch bank of the United States, in Boston, because they have other buildings so near them that exterior beauty is taken from them.

proportion to its height. It is inclosed with a suitable fence. It has a spacious cellar underneath its whole area, which serves as a substitute for the horse sheds, and last of all, it has a spacious vestry built at the expense of the minister. This meeting house was built chiefly at the expense of a few farmers, and attests how much may be effected by the voluntary efforts of religious men. A few years ago, the first parish voted in the *great bass viol*, to help the singing. That innovation grieved several old men who opposed it, one of whom determined once more in his life time to hear his Maker praised without such a profane accompaniment, and to accomplish that purpose he secretly rubbed tallow on the strings of the instrument. This was the first and probably the last effort that will be made to resist innovation, for very soon was added the flute and the fiddle, and then came a fine toned organ. Since it has ceased to be a custom to pray against the pope as anti-christ, what assurance have we that a love of change, or a desire of improvement in ornamenting houses of public worship, will stop at any given point? Will not superfluous wealth employ our native artists in ornamenting our churches? The christian community seems quite unconscions of the career that is commenced in the new taste and style of architectural ornament. Some imagine that the stubborn New England character will resist the influence of wealth, of the arts, of accidents, and of time. Let them reflect that the first christians, like the first settlers of New England, were obliged to retire from the presence of kings, of courts, and cultivated society. But when wealth and power came into their hands, the taste of the christian world was soon changed, and gorgeous palaces were deemed suitable places for the devotion of the people. Since the puritanical aversion to organs has so far given way, as even to admit flutes and fiddles into church music, we may well anticipate that before the expiration of two hundred years more, the finest portraits of the apostles and saints will appear on the walls of some congregational meeting houses.

CONCLUSION.

THE comparative merit of every place, as one which should be sought or abandoned, depends on the views and taste of him who makes the inquiry. On this point it is not worth while for an inhabitant to say any thing, least his advertisement be imputed to vanity or ill will, but may he not suggest, after a pretty full history and description of the town has been given, that if any man be influenced by the suggestions of philosophy, or religion, or love of literary leisure, to retire to a healthy residence near the city, combining some of the principal advantages, both of a large town and the country, where he may be a calm spectator of the little strifes and follies and revolutions in the world, he may possibly find that DEDHAM has some positive recommendations to him.

That employment and situation in life, which the poets and philosophers of every age have represented as the most agreeable to the nature of man, is that of a husbandman, the cultivator of his own land, free from ambition, free from the dangers and temptations of more lucrative employments, and free from debt. The epithet, *freeman*, may with propriety be applied to him, since he is not a slave to ambition or to great men. This sentiment seems to have been a leading motive of the first settlers in this town, and every successive generation must have had increasing evidence, that the way and the taste of their fathers was good. And we too, having reviewed their doings and their characters, in a period of one hundred and ninety years, must yield our entire assent to the same opinion. This sentiment is asserted in the title page, in the language of a poet in the Roman court, and it may in conclusion, be reiterated in the words of his translator.

Like the first race of mortals blest is he,
From debts and usury and business free ;
With his own team, who ploughs the soil,
Which grateful once, confessed his fathers' toil.

THE END.

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